NEW

THE WINDSORS

UNCOVER THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF BRITAIN'S EVOLVING DYNASTY

ROYAL SCANDAL

The rumours, affairs and treachery that threatened the monarchy

Digital Edition

EIGHTH EDITION

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OUR
KING
ABDICATION
MEANS
REVOLUTION

THE ABDICATION CRISIS • SURVIVING WAR • ENDURING LOVE

WELCOME

While wartime Europe watched on as its monarchies floundered and fell in the face of revolution, one particular king was determined that the same fate would not befall his throne. George V of the United Kingdom clung to his crown, evolving and modernising his family to face the challenges of a new era. In 1917, as German Gotha bombers savaged his nation, George shrugged off his last-remaining Germanic tie, the family name of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and embraced the thoroughly British new dynastic name of Windsor.

Over the following pages, discover the family's remarkable story, from the scandal and rumours that threatened the future of the monarchy, to the loves and losses that affected the dynasty.

FUTURE

THE WINDSORS

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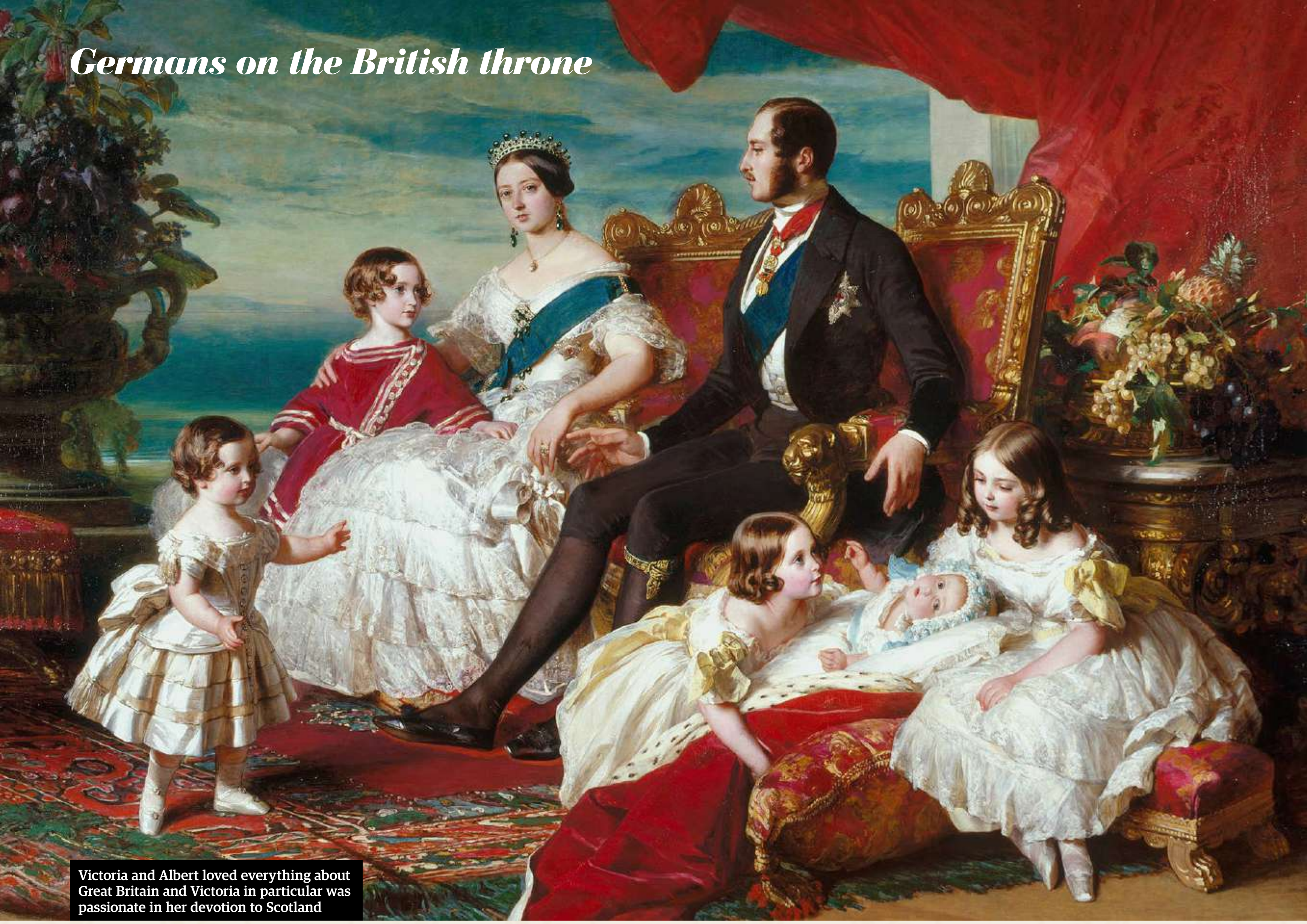


Victoria and Albert loved everything about Great Britain and Victoria in particular was passionate in her devotion to Scotland

GERMANS ON THE BRITISH THRONE

What could be more quintessentially British than a royal family? Especially a royal family that some say has its roots not in England, but over the sea in Germany

Written by Catherine Curzon

The royal family is at the heart of the United Kingdom's most glittering and traditional displays of pageantry and pomp – and Queen Elizabeth II, the woman who sits at its pinnacle, is a worldwide symbol not just of the current royal family, but generations of hereditary rule and privilege. Yet even though it might seem as though there is nothing and nobody more British than Queen Elizabeth II and her descendants, it isn't unusual to hear critics of the royal family dismiss the House of Windsor as a bunch of very lucky Germans who have managed to cling to the British throne with little right to do so.

Claims of opportunistic Germans on the throne of Great Britain were certainly accurate in centuries past, yet do such claims hold water today? The argument over whether those early German monarchs should have been there at all is one that involves family feuds, religious discrimination and a Glorious Revolution, but what truth is there in protestations that the current House of Windsor is more German than British? To properly answer this question, one must go all the way back to the 17th century and a country in turmoil, poised on the brink of a seismic shift in power.

The road that led to the accession of the first German king of the United Kingdom began back in 1688 and emerged, as so many things did, from a dispute over religion. Although he had been raised in the Church of England, King James II of England had converted to Catholicism more than 15 years before he was crowned. Although he wasn't king at the time of his conversion, he would become head of the Church of England when he succeeded to the throne. Fearing the fallout should his true faith become known, James kept the secret for the better part of ten years and remained a regular attendee of Anglican services.

When James' true faith became public knowledge, the country was shocked. Though he agreed to raise his daughters, Mary and Anne, as Anglican, it was a compromise he wasn't willing to make when it came to his son and heir, James, Prince of Wales. Instead the Prince of Wales was baptised into the Church of Rome, guaranteeing at least another generation of Catholic dominance. That was the final draw for a group of influential Protestant nobles. They invited the king's son-in-law, William III, Prince of Orange, to come to England with his wife, Mary, and claim the throne.

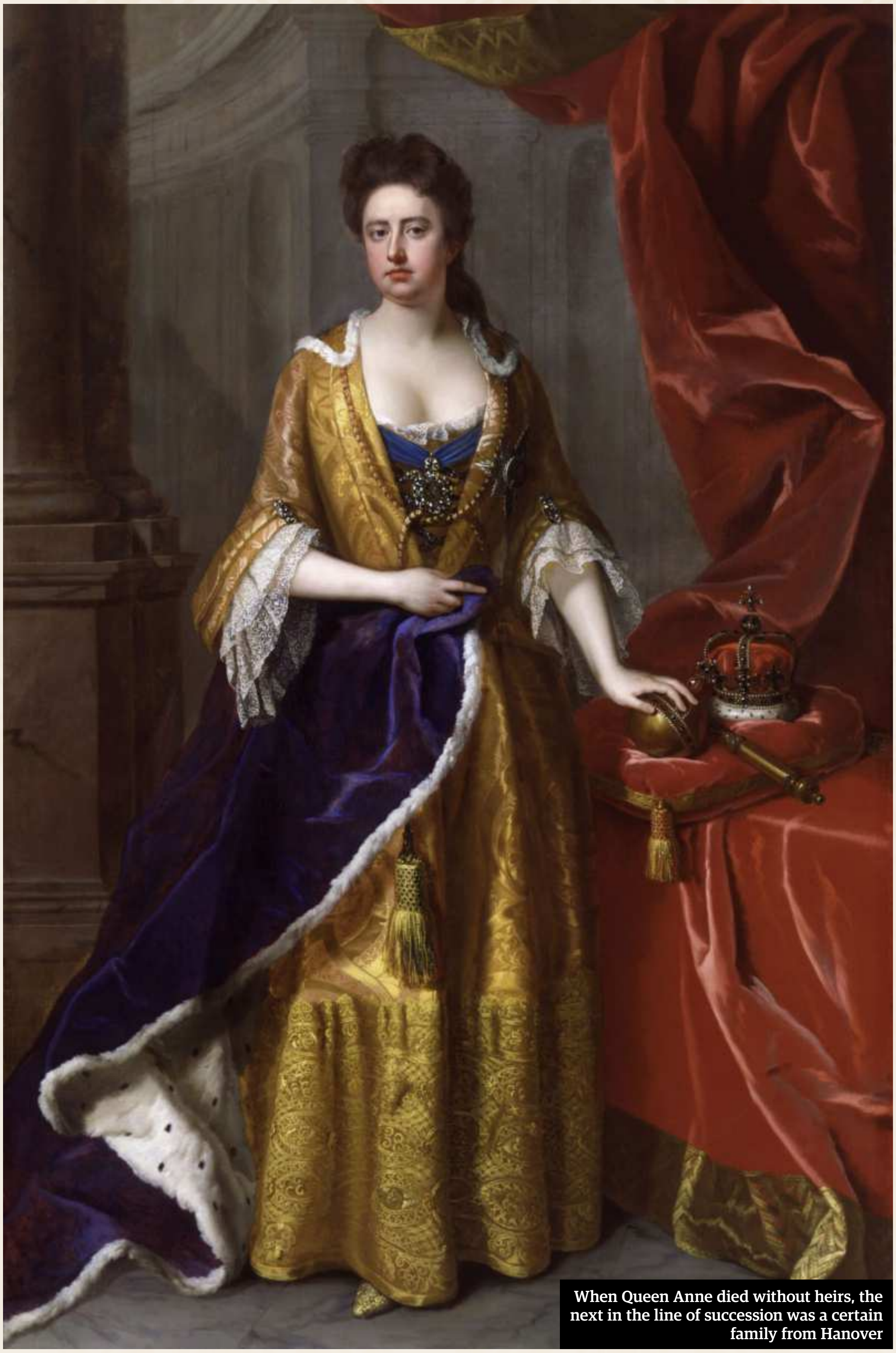
William arrived in England ready for war but James II was confident of victory and rejected offers of military assistance from the Catholic French monarchy. However, when William and his troops landed in England they were immediately joined not only by James' other daughter, Anne, but by Protestant soldiers who had chosen to desert their king and fight on the side of the prince of Orange.

James II was beaten without drawing a single blade or firing a single cannon. He headed for the sanctuary of France and went into exile as the newly enshrined Protestant monarchs ascended the throne of England on the back of the Glorious Revolution, ending the short-lived reign of Roman Catholicism. Although William and Mary weren't German, the coup that placed them on the throne unexpectedly redrew the line of succession. They presided over the introduction of the Bill of Rights, which explicitly ruled that no Roman Catholic could ever sit on the throne of England again. This shunted aside over 50 legitimate claimants to the English throne in favour of some who were very far flung indeed.

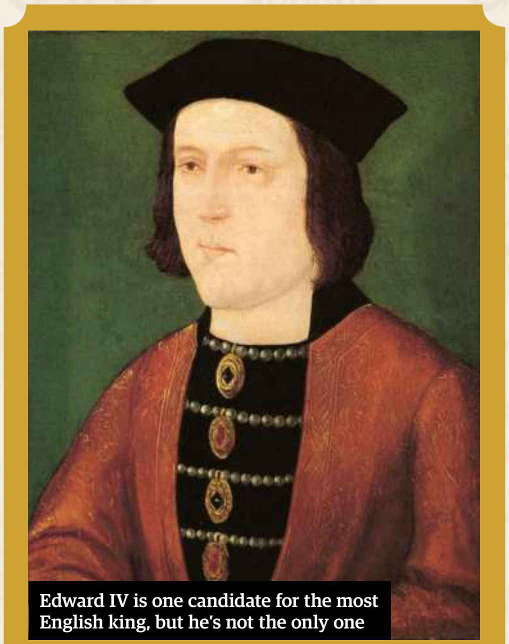
William and Mary had no heirs and neither did the next in line, Mary's sister, Anne. With the young Prince of Wales excluded from the line of succession by his faith and showing no signs of wishing to convert to Anglicanism, this meant that the next in line to the crown would come from a less direct branch of descendants. That branch could be found in Hanover, where Electress Sophia, mother of the future George I, was watching the comings and goings in her homeland with interest.

Sophia was the granddaughter of James I and daughter of Elizabeth Stuart and she was also, crucially, Protestant. Theoretically this meant that she was second in line to the throne after Princess Anne. However, Anne was still only in her 20s and was, with her husband, Prince George of Denmark, engaged in the all-important business of making heirs. Although her first half dozen pregnancies had ended in tragedy, it was highly likely that she would yet provide an heir and if she did, Sophia's place in the line of succession would be put back. Sophia fully expected that to happen and at this early stage, she had no expectation of ever taking the crown.

Anne and George did indeed have another child and their son, Prince William, Duke of Gloucester, was born in July 1689. With his birth, the line of English succession was, they all hoped, assured.



When Queen Anne died without heirs, the next in the line of succession was a certain family from Hanover



Edward IV is one candidate for the most English king, but he's not the only one

The most British family

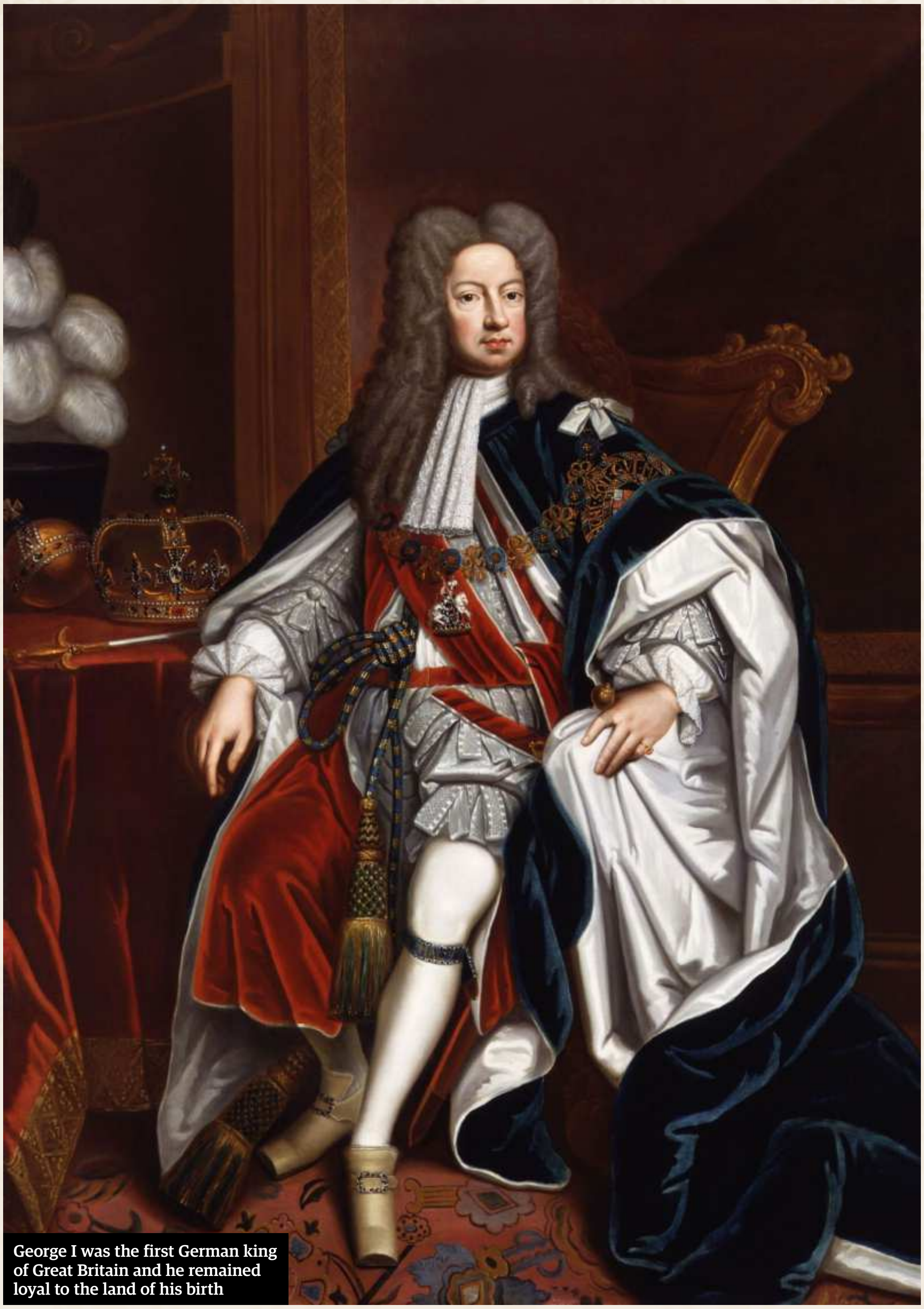
In over 1,000 years of monarchy, which ruler was really the most British?

What makes a person a certain nationality is a complex question to answer. For some, it's a question of ancestry and that dynastic favourite, bloodline. For others, it can be a combination of factors including language, culture and ideology.

If one is to use bloodline as a benchmark, then one might argue that there has never been a solely British monarch. From Celts to Plantagenets, Stuarts, Hanovers and beyond, the rulers of England and later the United Kingdom have always been a melting pot of powerful marriages and alliances. In terms of blood relatives, Edward IV might make an argument for being the most British as three generations of his ancestors could lay claim to English or Irish blood, but it was far from an exact science.

In cultural terms, however, many monarchs have gone out of their way to convince their subjects that they are irrefutably British, regardless of where they were born or who they might have married. Queen Elizabeth I established herself as the defender of the realm and George III moulded himself into a quintessential English country gentleman. Meanwhile, Queen Victoria threw herself into Highland pageantry and all things tartan and George V even anglicised the family name.

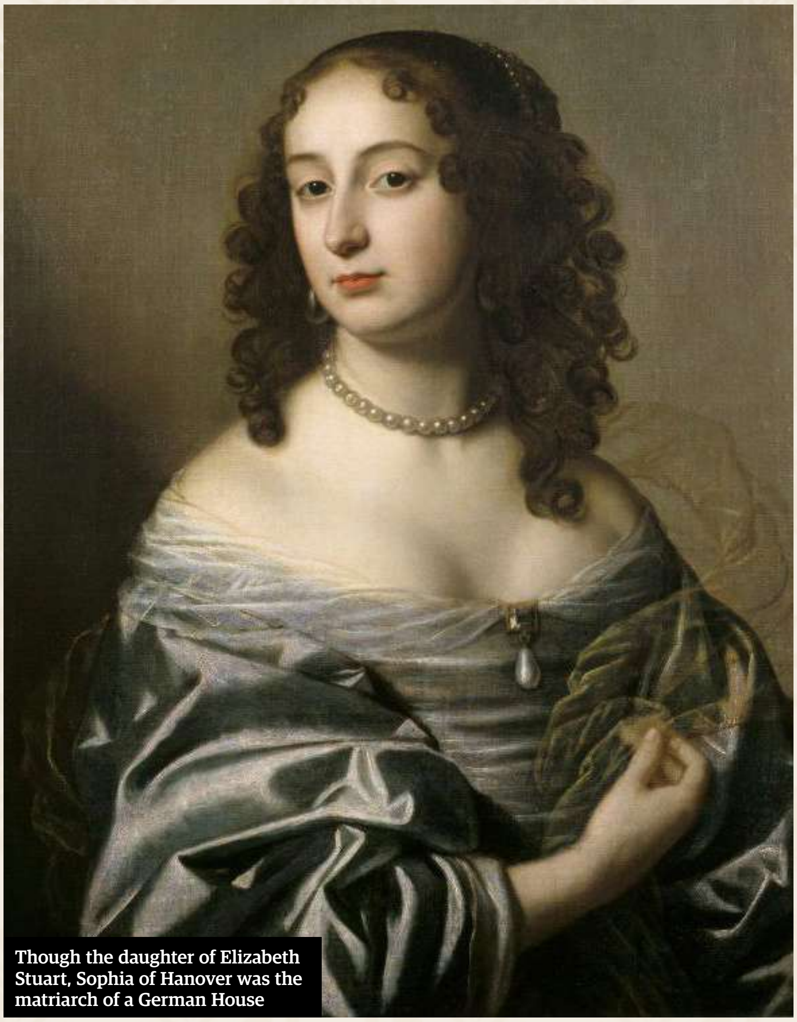
The House of Windsor might make a claim for being the most British simply by dint of its adherence to tradition and protocol. It has become the model of a modern monarchy, evolving and adapting to the modern era with each passing generation. Where it goes next has yet to be determined.



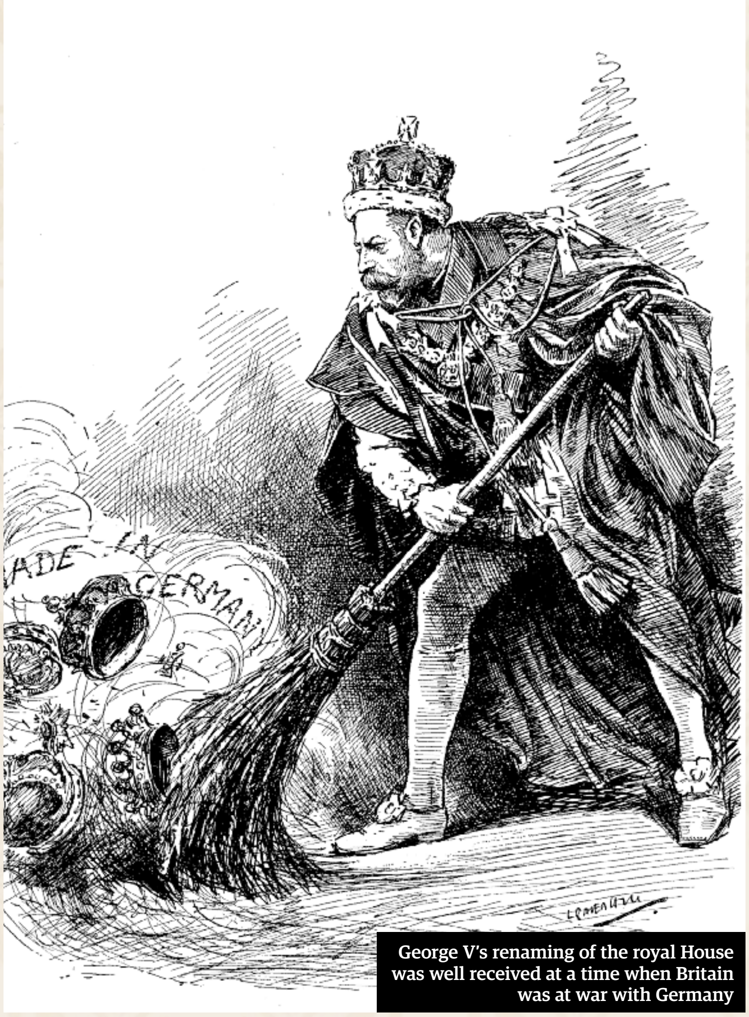
George I was the first German king of Great Britain and he remained loyal to the land of his birth

Yet the young duke was a sickly child from the very beginning and in July 1700, he died. Anne and George had no other living children and over in Hanover, the electoral family sat up and began to take notice. As she approached her 70th birthday, Sophia was suddenly within touching distance of the crown and though Anne was 35 years her junior, those seven traumatic pregnancies had taken a terrible toll on her health. In the years to come, Anne would suffer ten more failed and debilitating pregnancies.

The Protestant line of succession had dwindled at an alarming rate and now only William and Anne stood between Sophia and the crown. Still Sophia was sure that Anne would outlive her, but she began to prepare her son, George, for the role he would one day inhabit. Of course there was the small matter of the Catholic heirs who had been pushed aside by the Glorious Revolution, and in France the so-called 'Old Pretender' wasn't about to go quietly. He was James Stuart, the Prince of Wales, and as a Catholic was determined to win back the throne that he believed was rightly his. In time, Stuart's own son, Charles, variously known as the 'Young Pretender' or 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', would continue his father's crusade,



Though the daughter of Elizabeth Stuart, Sophia of Hanover was the matriarch of a German House



George V's renaming of the royal House was well received at a time when Britain was at war with Germany

"He loved his homeland above any other, bringing over his trusted German aides and favourites and speaking in German"

leading the supporters of the Jacobite cause to their disastrous last stand on the field at Culloden.

Passed by Parliament in 1701, the Act of Settlement was the first official acknowledgement of the Hanoverian claim to the throne of England. It specifically stated that if no further children were born to William – Mary had died in 1694 – or Anne, then Sophia or the next in her own line would travel from Hanover to rule over Great Britain. Mindful of the problem of split loyalties, the Act also contained a clause that any monarchs who were foreign natives couldn't use English forces for the defence of their other realms unless English interests were also at risk. Another clause, which George I had swiftly repealed upon his accession, forbade the sovereign from travelling outside of Great Britain without the express permission of Parliament.

All of this came not a moment too soon. James II died in 1701 and his followers in France proclaimed his son, the Old Pretender, king in exile. Yet the constitutional wheels were turning in a very different direction and diplomatic missions from England to Hanover were already in progress, smoothing the path for the family who it looked would soon be the rulers of England.

When William III died in 1702, Queen Anne succeeded to the crown. Old before her time and with no living heirs, she was still determined to see her own line hold onto power but of the many pregnancies that followed her accession, there were no surviving children. In preparation for what was to come, Dowager Electress Sophia's name was added to the Prayer for the Royal Family in the Book of Common Prayer, putting the final official stamp on the Hanoverian claim to the crown and, hopefully, giving the public time to become accustomed to it.

In fact, Sophia was right to believe that Anne would outlive her regardless of her ravaged health. The Dowager Electress Sophia died in Hanover on 8 June 1714, aged 83. Anne passed away just a few weeks later on 1 August at the age of just 49. As soon as the final breath left her body, the Act of Settlement came into play and in that moment, Great Britain came under the rule of its first German monarch, King George I.

As George set sail for England, his new realm was placed under the care of a regency council handpicked by Sophia and George. He landed with 100 German courtiers, advisors and staff at Greenwich on 18 September 1714 and was unapologetically, absolutely German. He loved his homeland above any other, bringing over his trusted German aides and favourites and speaking in German both in private and public. Though claims that George never learned a single word of English are not entirely true, there's no doubt that he certainly preferred to conduct himself in German or, when necessary, French.

The reign of the House of Stuart was no more and in its place, the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg-Hanover now ruled. George I was followed by his son, George II, who was also born and raised in Germany but it was there that the reign of native Germans ended. George III, the great-grandson of George I who was crowned in 1760, was certainly a British king in terms of birth and outlook.

George III was born in England and never travelled overseas. He adored the English

Queen Elizabeth II has become an international symbol of British tradition and pageantry

> "He set trends in fashion and culture, and his court had no trace of the stuffy German propriety that had ruled the throne room"

countryside and spoke primarily in English, which his Georgian predecessors certainly hadn't. George III's son, George IV, was indisputably English too and became known as the 'first gentleman of all England'. He set trends in fashion and culture, and his court had no trace of the stuffy German propriety that had ruled the throne room of his ancestor George I.

However, no matter where they were born and raised, there was one thing that all of the Hanoverian kings shared. Every one of them, from George I to William IV, married German princesses and the reasons for this were threefold. Firstly, at the time royals were expected only to marry other royals – marrying a commoner was unheard of. Secondly, an heir to the British throne must marry a Protestant, for the Royal Marriages Act of 1772 ruled that any children born to an heir who had married a Roman Catholic would be barred from the line of succession. Thirdly, the German royal family was so extensive and scattered that Prussian statesman Otto von Bismarck eventually called the House of Coburg "the stud farm of Europe". With so many unmarried German royals to choose from, it was the ideal place from which to find a suitable spouse.

Yet as the years passed and the Georges had families of their own, the immigrant kings became assimilated, as one would naturally expect them to. George III was always quick to celebrate his Britishness and did everything he could to assure his subjects that he considered himself English above all, despite the fact that both of his parents were actually German. Yet the tradition of German spouses continued until Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, made his own fateful marriage to Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. Their only child, Victoria, grew up to be the last monarch of the Hanoverian family line. Queen Victoria is, arguably, one of the most enduring symbols of Britain in the age of its empire.

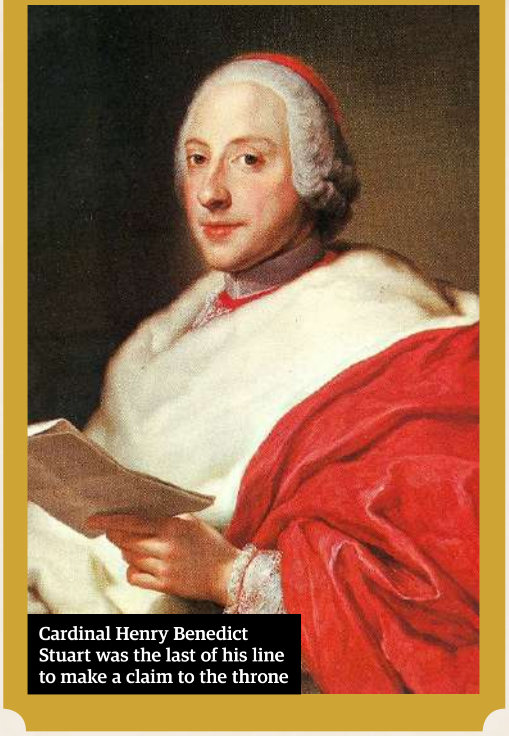
The Stuart claim

When the House of Hanover claimed the British throne, what happened to those they supplanted?

The Glorious Revolution swept the Roman Catholic James II off the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland, and changed the line of succession forever. James, however, and supporters of the dethroned Jacobite cause were far from happy with this turn of events and in the decades that followed, they did all they could to restore the Stuarts to the throne.

The most concerted efforts to return the crown to the House of Stuart took place throughout the 18th century, with a series of Jacobite revolts. The last of these was the Jacobite rising of 1745, when an army led by Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, marched into England. Hoping to take advantage of the fact that British forces were engaged elsewhere in the War of the Austrian Succession, the Jacobites got as far as Derby before they retreated back to Scotland. It was here that they faced their last stand. A decisive and brutal defeat at Culloden effectively ended Jacobite hopes forever.

The last Stuart to lodge a claim to the crown was Henry Benedict Stuart, a Rome-born cardinal and son of the Old Pretender. However, though he believed himself the rightful king, he made no effort to take the throne and instead dedicated his life to his Roman Catholic calling. At his death in 1807, the Stuart crown jewels, which he had kept in his possession, were returned to the Prince of Wales, later George IV. Benedict was buried in Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican beside a monument to the House of Stuart.


Cardinal Henry Benedict Stuart was the last of his line to make a claim to the throne

Young royals, such as the Cambridge family, will steer the House of Windsor into its next generation

Victoria grew up with German as her first language though she spoke English fluently. She continued the family marriage tradition when she took as her husband Albert, her German cousin. With that marriage she took Albert's name, the distinctly Germanic Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and at first it seemed as though all was about to proceed as normal. Yet unlike the many German royals who had married into the English royal family before him, Albert was determined to do all he could to integrate into his new home. Victoria, meanwhile, became ever more Scottish with every passing year. She swathed herself and her homes in tartan and was increasingly to be found at her favourite residence of Balmoral, which Albert had acquired simply because it reminded him so much of his German homeland.

Victoria's children continued the pattern of German spouses and among her many grandchildren she counted Kaiser Wilhelm II, a familial connection that took on a new significance when World War I broke out. The name Saxe-Coburg-Gotha took on a rather different complexion too when that same kaiser began dispatching fleet of Gotha bombers over England. Suddenly that German name sent all the wrong signals and King George V, the kaiser's cousin, swiftly decided that the name of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha would be consigned to history. Instead, his family would be known by the name of Windsor, inspired by that most British of castles. He hadn't chosen the name lightly either, but had also considered such traditional candidates as Plantagenet, York and just simple England.

Not only did the family take an English name, but those traditional German marriages also became a thing of the past as the king's sons married not royals from the continent, but noble British brides. One of these was the Queen Mother, Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, herself the daughter of the Scottish earl of Strathmore and his English wife. When Queen Elizabeth II was born she was the daughter of a mother and father who had both been born in England and who were, to all intents and purposes, British.

The Windsor name stuck and when Elizabeth II married Prince Philip, he adopted the name Mountbatten, anglicising his own German-Danish-Greek origins. Though his parents were Danish and German, the duke of Edinburgh can be connected in some way to virtually every royal house in Europe and Queen Victoria too. He is a naturalised Briton and served in the Royal Navy, cementing his British credentials.

So while it's indisputable that the current royal family certainly does have connections to Germany, to call it German is a massive overstatement and since members of the royal family no longer have to marry other royals, the influence of German royalty has depleted almost completely. In fact, there was never any strange conspiracy regarding the prevalence of German spouses among the continental royal dynasties - there were simply a lot of German royals on the marriage market who were ready to fill any vacancies that might arise.

The House of Windsor is also descended from centuries of royal dynasties that have their roots all over Europe, including England and France in addition to Germany. Queen Elizabeth II and all of her children have been born, raised and educated in England and speak English as their first language, not to mention the fact that many have served in the British Armed Forces.

In the 21st century, those dynastic marriages are a thing of the past, with today's young royals free to marry not for politics, but for love. It might fairly be said that the royal family today is more British than ever before yet it is still a product of mixed ancestry from all over the continent and beyond. In that, at least, they have much in common with the rest of us.

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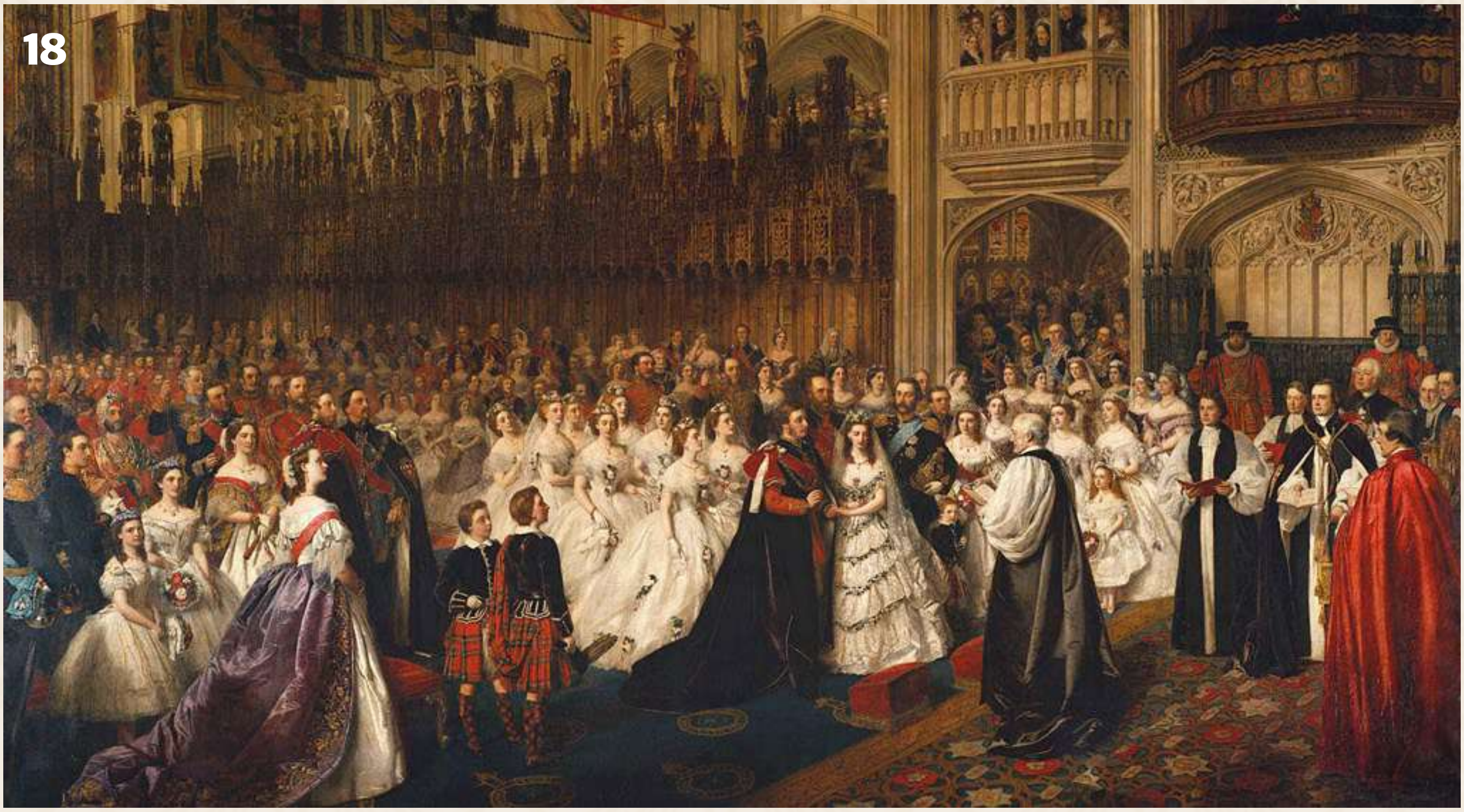
THE HOUSE OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA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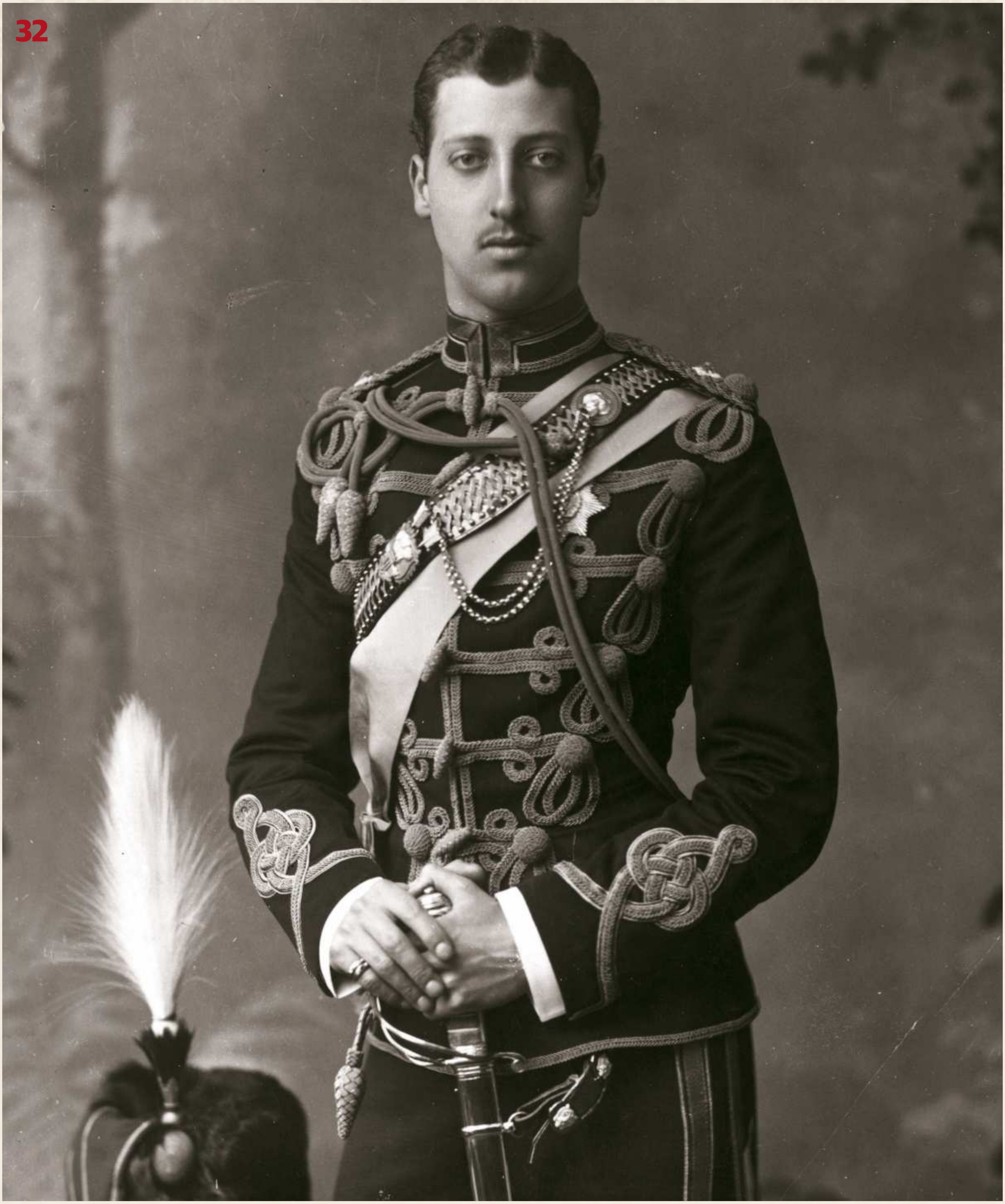


♛ x Order of succession

● Marriage

● Divorced

THE SAXE-COBURG & GOTHA DYNASTY

As the Hanoverian dynasty drew to its end upon the death of Queen Victoria, her son Edward became the father of an entirely new house

VICTORIA

1840-1901

Victoria was empress of Germany for just 99 days. Her eldest son ascended the German throne as Kaiser Wilhelm II.

FREDERICK III OF PRUSSIA

1831-1888

Married in 1858, Victoria and Frederick had eight children. Their daughter, Sophia, married Greek royalty.

ALICE

1843-1878

A haemophilia carrier, Alice's son inherited the gene, as did her daughter, who passed it on to her son, Alexei.

LOUIS IV OF HESSE

1837-1892

Married in 1862, Alice and Louis had seven children. Their daughter Alix married into Russian royalty, but was killed in 1918.

HELENA

1846-1923

After a scandalous affair with her father's librarian was discovered in 1863, Helena married an impoverished German prince.

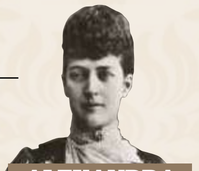
♛ 2

EDWARD VII

1841-1910

♛ 1901-1910

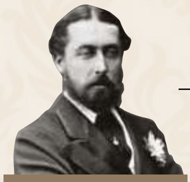
Edward's liaisons scandalised his parents, but he became a popular king in 1901.



ALEXANDRA OF DENMARK

1844-1925

Edward and Alexandra married in 1863. She bore his infidelities well, even sometimes befriending his mistresses.



ALFRED

1844-1900

Alfred was the first member of the royal family to visit Australia. He died of throat cancer in July 1900.

MARIA ALEXANDROVNA

1853-1920

Married in 1874, Alfred and Maria had five children. Their daughter Marie married into Romanian royalty.

ALBERT, DUKE OF CLARENCE

1864-1892

Destined to inherit the throne, Albert inherited his father's penchant for scandal and died just over a month before his wedding.

♛ 3

GEORGE V

1865-1936

♛ 1910-1936

The second-born son, George became heir apparent after his brother's death.

MARY OF TECK

1867-1953

Initially betrothed to Albert, Duke of Clarence, Mary married his younger brother after her betrothed's demise.

LOUISE

1867-1931

In 1911, Louise and her family sailed to Egypt but were shipwrecked. Her husband later died and she became Duchess of Fife.

ALEXANDER DUFF

1849-1912

Married in 1889, Louise and Alexander had three children, though their eldest son was tragically stillborn.

1

QUEEN VICTORIA

1819-1901

♛ 1837-1901

Known as the grandmother of Europe, Victoria's children married into many of the continent's royal families.

PRINCE ALBERT

1818-1861

The beloved husband of Queen Victoria, Albert's untimely death left Victoria devastated and she wore black for the rest of her life.

Edward and Alexandra pose with their five surviving children

CHRISTIAN OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

1831-1917

Married in 1866, Christian and Helena had six children. Only four of them survived to adulthood.

ARTHUR

1850-1942

Arthur served in the British Army for 40 years, later becoming Governor General of Canada. He died aged 91.

LOUISE-MARGARET OF PRUSSIA

1860-1917

Married in 1879, Arthur and Louise had three children. Their daughter Margaret married into Swedish royalty.

BEATRICE

1857-1944

Beatrice remained at her mother's side for her entire life, and after Victoria's death Beatrice edited her journals.

HENRY OF BATTENBURG

1858-1896

Married in 1885, Henry and Beatrice had four kids. Their daughter Victoria Eugenie married into Spanish royalty.

LOUISE

1848-1939

As a child Louise was inquisitive and was nicknamed 'Little Miss Why'. She was a favourite of her father.

JOHN CAMPBELL

1845-1914

John and Louise married 1871. Their marriage started happily, but the couple drifted apart in later years.

LEOPOLD

1853-1884

A haemophiliac, Leopold struggled to find a wife until his mother interfered. He died months before his son's birth.

HELENA OF WALDECK AND PYRMONT

1861-1922

Helena and Leopold married in 1882. Their son Charles fought for Germany in WWI and joined the Nazis in WWII.

VICTORIA

1868-1935

Princess Victoria never married, instead remaining with her mother as her companion at Sandringham House.

MAUD

1869-1938

Despite her proud English heritage, Maud was determined to bring up her son as a true Norwegian.

HAAKON VII OF NORWAY

1872-1957

Maud and Haakon married in 1896 and had one child, who inherited the throne in 1957 as Olav V of Norway.

JOHN

1871-1871

The youngest son of Edward and Alexandra died just one day after his birth at Sandringham House.

© Getty

THE SCANDALOUS PRINCE OF WALES

As the eldest son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, Edward had everything that a young Prince of Wales might wish for, but was a magnet for scandal and drove his respectable mother to distraction

Written by Catherine Curzon

Born in 1841 to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Edward, Prince of Wales, reigned as King Edward VII for just nine years. With a mother for whom respectable piety was a way of life, you might have expected that her eldest son would have followed her lead and lived without much extravagance and scandal. If you did think that though, you would have been in for a very rude awakening indeed.

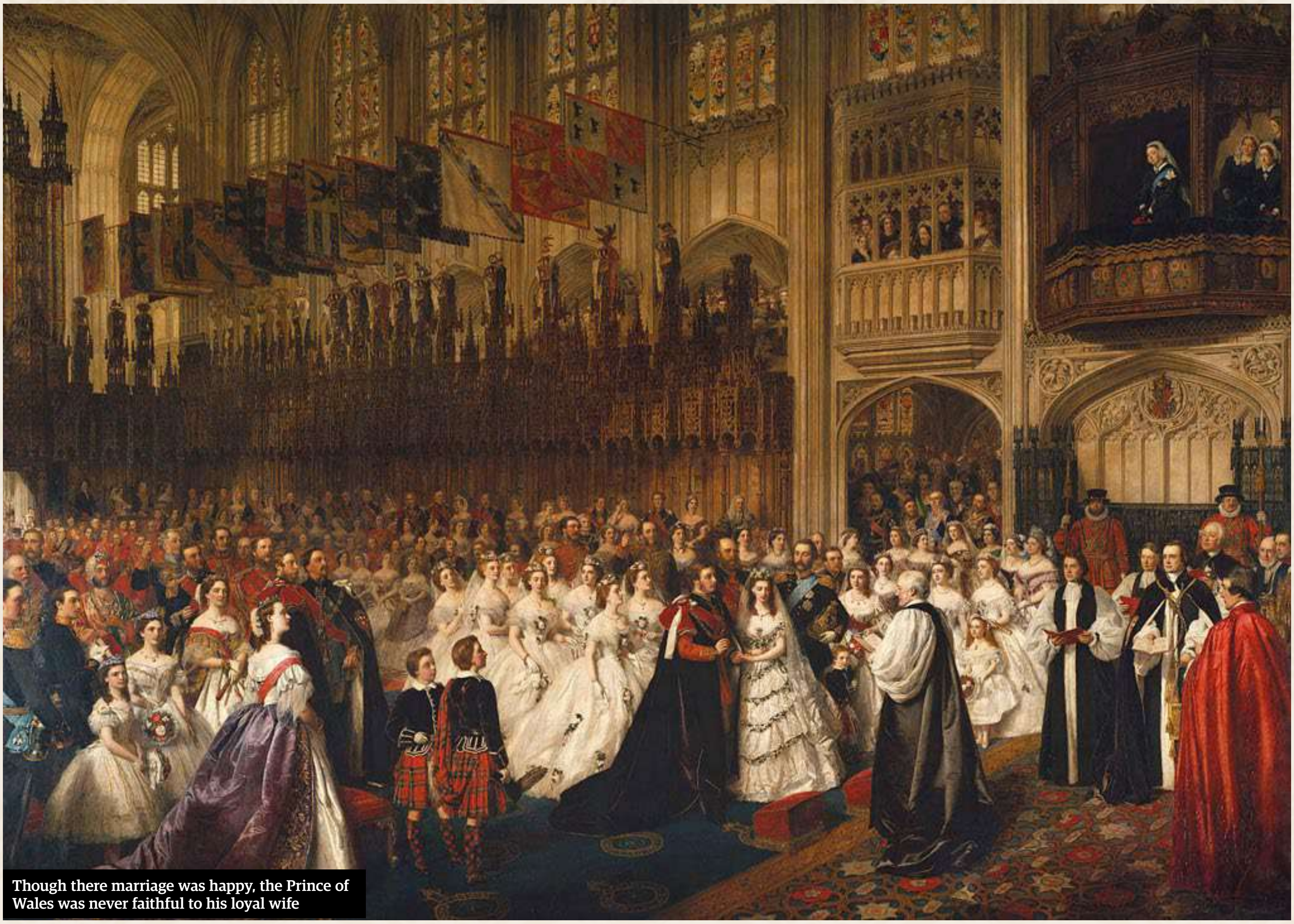
In fact, Edward was anything but respectable and had no interest in the sort of insular existence that his mother and father had long enjoyed. Instead he wanted fun and pleasure, perhaps because he got little of it during childhood. Rather, young Edward was subjected to a rigid and strict regime of education. Prince Albert devised his son's education and with it, a stern and unflinching system of discipline should he step out of line. The little prince was being trained for monarchy and as far as Victoria and Albert were concerned, that left little room for frivolity. Yet their son struggled with his regime and consistently managed to underachieve, unable to thrive in such rigid conditions.

As Edward grew older he became increasingly determined to undertake a military career, dreaming of active service - something which no British king had done since George II. Sadly for the prince, his mother had other ideas. Though Victoria allowed him to be made a colonel in the British Army, she had no intention of letting the heir to the throne risk his skin on active services.

Perhaps hoping to satisfy Edward's wish to be a soldier, Victoria and Albert agreed that their 19-year-old son could spend a summer in Ireland, taking part in military manoeuvres. The Prince of Wales passed three months encamped at Curragh with the members of the Grenadier Guards and in the course of getting to know the soldiers there, they learned that the young heir to the throne was still a sexual novice. This, the soldiers decided, would never do. Taking it upon themselves to help Edward along this delicate rite of passage, they smuggled an actress, Nellie Clifden, into the camp to meet him.

In his diary on 6, 9 and 10 September 1861, the prince recorded three short, handwritten notes. They read, "N.C. 1st time, N.C. 2nd time, N.C. 3rd time", and each one referred to a sexual liaison with Nellie Clifden. With those deceptively simple lines, Edward memorialised the loss of his virginity. The innocent Prince of Wales was no more and those three trysts were the opening act in one of the most scandalous and energetic love lives the royal family had ever seen. Sadly little is known of Nellie and the rest of her life remains a mystery, but if Edward hoped to keep his liaison with her a secret, he was to receive a shock.

Blissfully unaware of Ms Clifden's trip to Curragh, Victoria and Albert had already decided that his next move should be to take a bride



Though there marriage was happy, the Prince of Wales was never faithful to his loyal wife

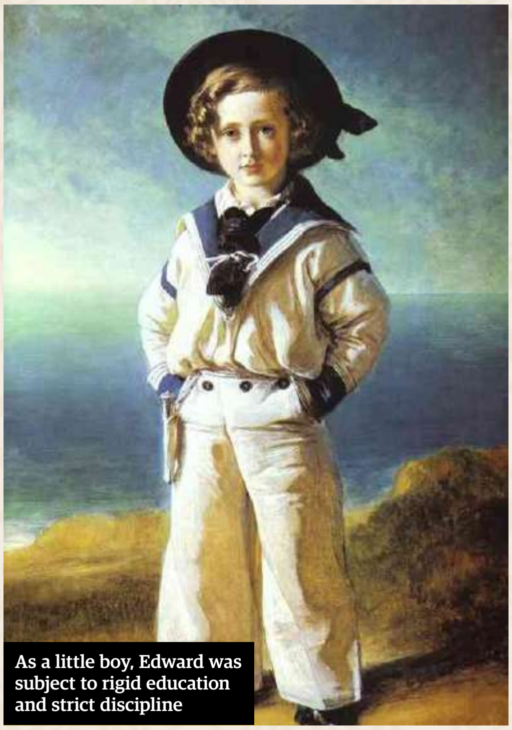
and get on with the business of creating heirs. Without seeking his opinion on the matter, Queen Victoria sent Edward to Germany, supposedly to observe military manoeuvres whilst there. In fact, she had already arranged for him to meet Princess Alexandra, the highly eligible daughter of Prince Christian and Princess Louise of Denmark. It proved to be a fateful decision, for the young couple got on very well and as soon as Edward had returned to England, plans were being made for a betrothal between the young pair. For Victoria and Albert, it looked as though Edward was going to toe the line of familial respectability, but she had reckoned without what would prove to be a very prodigious appetite.

Somehow news of Edward's trysts with Nellie reached his horrified parents, the same parents who had put their cheery, libertine son through an education so devoted to austere respectability that it might be argued to have sent him in the other direction. Though Prince Albert was already suffering from ill health, when Edward returned to his studies at Cambridge University, his appalled father visited him there. Albert's intention was to have a heart to heart with the son who he and Victoria felt had badly let them down. It was a cold and rainy day in November 1861 when father and son met to discuss what had actually happened in Ireland. What happened during that meeting was never made public but when Albert returned to London and his wife, his health began to deteriorate rapidly.

Albert died a fortnight after the meeting with Edward and Queen Victoria, mired in grief, lashed out for someone to blame. Despite the fact that Albert had died as a result of typhoid fever, she was convinced that his end had come about not due to illness, but because of a broken heart. A broken heart, Victoria thought, caused by Edward's scandalous behaviour with the mysterious Nellie Clifden. Queen Victoria wrote of her eldest son, "I never can, or shall, look at him without a shudder," and she never forgave Edward for causing his father to venture out in the bad weather. She continued to berate Edward in her letters for years, telling him that he was a fallen man and that his immorality and carnal desires had been the cause of his own father's death. There's really little wonder that the embattled Edward plunged headfirst into pleasure.

Lillie Langtry was a superstar and when she and Edward met, sparks flew

Princess Alexandra proved to be exactly the wife that Edward needed


As a little boy, Edward was subject to rigid education and strict discipline

Known for her riotous social life, Daisy Greville, Countess of Warwick, wasn't afraid to be seen out and about with the prince

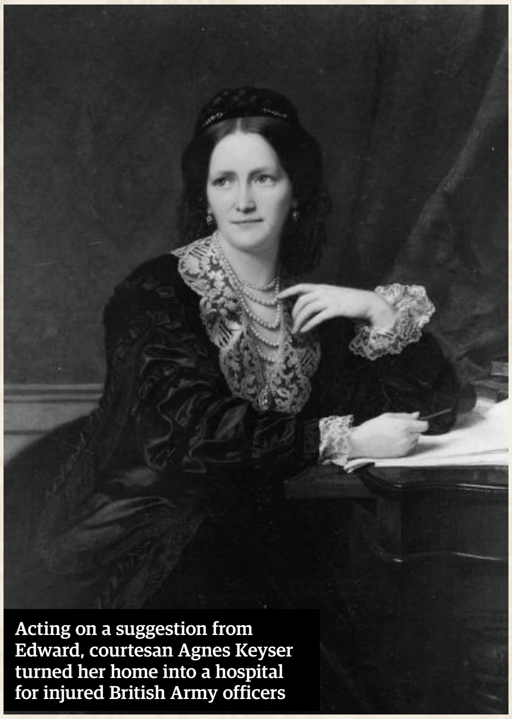
Nellie never ventured into notoriety again but for Edward, three tastes of excitement was never going to be enough. Kind, well-liked and independent, Edward gave up trying to impress his granite-faced mother. What was the point, after all, when she had already decided to hate him? Freed from the need to at least attempt to be the dutiful son, he embarked on life at the heart of the society jet set. He didn't forget Nellie either, but met her again in London and Cambridge, with a popular bit of gossip claiming that he even smuggled her into Windsor Castle on the night of his 20th birthday party.

Despite all of this coming and going, Edward married Princess Alexandra on 10 March 1863. They became the most glittering couple in London, celebrated for their fabulous parties and lavish dinners, all of which drew yet more disapproval from Victoria. Yet Edward was never a faithful husband despite his wife's unfailing fidelity, nor did he try to be.

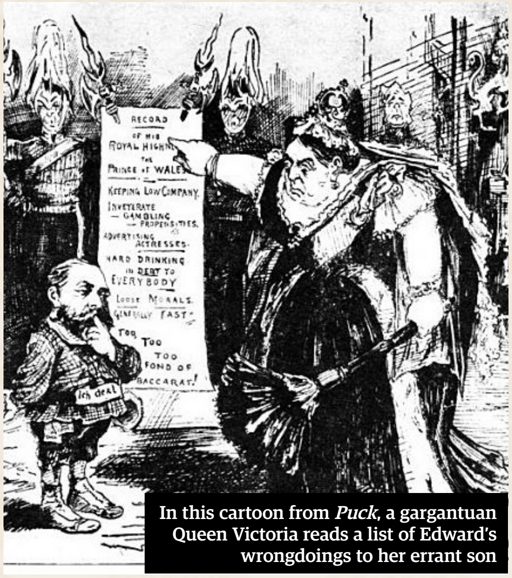
Though he had started his sex life in the arms of an actress, Edward preferred to find lovers from within his own social group. Perhaps the most tragic story that attached itself to him was his relationship with Lady Harriet Mordaunt, wife of Sir Charles Mordaunt, a Conservative MP. They socialised with the Prince of Wales and rumour had it that Lady Harriet took a number of lovers, with whom she whiled away the time whilst her husband was in the House of Commons. Sir Charles supposedly caught Edward and Lady Harriet in bed together in 1869 and from that day on, wouldn't allow his wife anywhere near the prince. When she gave birth to a seemingly blind daughter the following year, a distraught Lady Harriet became convinced that it was a divine punishment for her affairs and claimed that she had so many lovers that she couldn't be sure that Edward was the father. However, a collection of love letters from the prince convinced Mordaunt that he must be the man responsible. When the

> "Edward gave up trying to impress his granite-faced mother"

The Prince of Wales' relationship with his mother, Queen Victoria, was prickly at best



Acting on a suggestion from Edward, courtesan Agnes Keyser turned her home into a hospital for injured British Army officers



In this cartoon from *Puck*, a gargantuan Queen Victoria reads a list of Edward's wrongdoings to her errant son

couple reached the divorce court, Mordaunt warned the Prince of Wales that he should prepare to testify. In the event he wasn't named in the divorce at all but society gossips didn't let that stop them, and the prince's name was implicated in chattering circles, if not in legal ones.

Edward became the leading light of the fashionable Marlborough House set, an exclusive social group that took its name from his London home, where they met and partied together. Rumour had it that he sired a child with one of the members of the set, Lady Susan Vane-Tempest, in 1871, but little is known of the infant child beyond that. More famous, undoubtedly, was his liaison with Lillie Langtry, a bona fide superstar actress whose devoted fan base spanned from her American homeland all the way to Europe and beyond.

The Prince of Wales and Langtry met at a dinner party in 1877, which Lillie was attending with her husband. By this point Edward was a father of six and his wife, Alexandra, had suffered extensive periods of ill health throughout the marriage. Alexandra seemed to accept her husband's proclivities though one can only imagine what Queen Victoria thought when, soon after Edward and Langtry became lovers, he presented the actress to her.

Lillie Langtry became Edward's mistress and in the Marlborough House set, everyone knew it. Their affair ended when Langtry fell pregnant by another of her lovers in summer 1880, though the couple maintained an ongoing friendship. Although Edward wasn't the father of Lillie's baby, when her husband filed for divorce, rumours of the affair made it into print for the first time. Edward sued and the journalist who wrote the article was sentenced to a short jail term.

> "Edward was a father of six and his wife, Alexandra, had suffered extensive periods of ill health throughout the marriage"

A faithful wife

Whilst Edward VII played away, it was left to his wife to keep the home fires burning

Alexandra of Denmark married Edward, Prince of Wales, in 1863. She wasn't Victoria and Albert's first choice thanks to the fact that Denmark and Prussia were in conflict but with few other choices open to them, eventually the match was made.

Despite Edward's infidelities, the couple were mostly happy and together they had six children. Keen on hunting, animals and society, Alexandra and Queen Victoria didn't always see eye to eye, but Alexandra assumed many of the official responsibilities that the old queen didn't feel able to take on. Though Alexandra was enormously popular, when her eldest son, Prince Albert Victor, died in his 20s she withdrew, suffering from intense grief.

As Princess of Wales and later as queen consort, Alexandra didn't only tolerate her husband's mistresses, but showed them kindness and understanding. When Edward was on his death bed and his devoted lover, Alice Keppel, wished to see him, Alexandra welcomed her into Buckingham Palace to say a final goodbye.

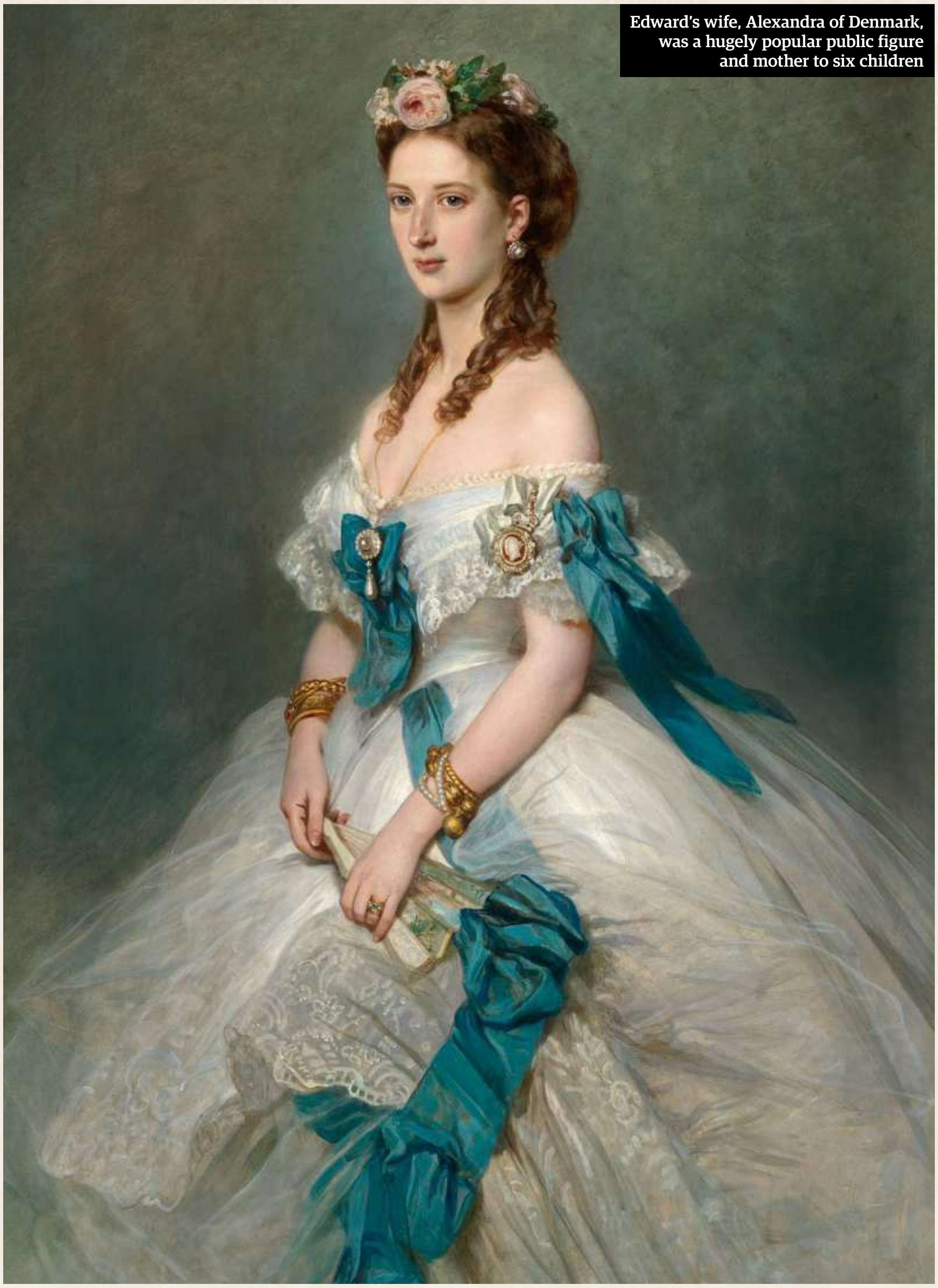
Alexandra nursed her husband through his final hours and following his death, devoted the rest of her life to philanthropy. She died in 1925 and was laid to rest beside the husband to whom she had remained forever faithful.

Seen here with her daughter, Victoria, Alexandra took her husband's infidelities on the chin and devoted herself to her family

Edward's affairs were many and varied and included the celebrated actress Sarah Bernhardt, and even Jennie, Lady Randolph Churchill, whom the Prince of Wales had introduced to the man who became her husband. Yet he didn't only seek relationships amongst theatricals and his own set, but loved to spend time at La Chabanais, arguably the most luxurious brothel Paris had ever known.

Known for its opulence and discretion, La Chabanais was a pleasure palace that stood in the shadow of the Louvre and counted some very famous names amongst its clients. Edward was a regular visitor throughout the 1880s and 1890s and became so popular at the brothel that a room was dedicated to him for his sole use. Amongst its exclusive features was a copper bathtub decorated with a figurehead that was half-woman and half-swan. Big enough to accommodate a party, when Edward visited he had the tub filled with champagne and would spend hours wallowing there in the company of a couple of his favourite courtesans. They would then retire together to relax in the shadow of Edward's own coat of arms, which dominated the wall above the bed.

Edward's room also contained an item of furniture which has become an infamous symbol of his sexual appetites. This was the Prince of Wales' siège d'amour, a very literal love seat. As a corpulent fellow, Edward needed to be comfortable during his amorous liaisons and the



Edward's wife, Alexandra of Denmark, was a hugely popular public figure and mother to six children specially constructed chair allowed him to get as comfortable as was humanly possible. Richly upholstered and constructed for strength as well as luxury, the chair allowed the plump prince and his hostesses to enjoy all manner of positions without putting undue physical strain on him.

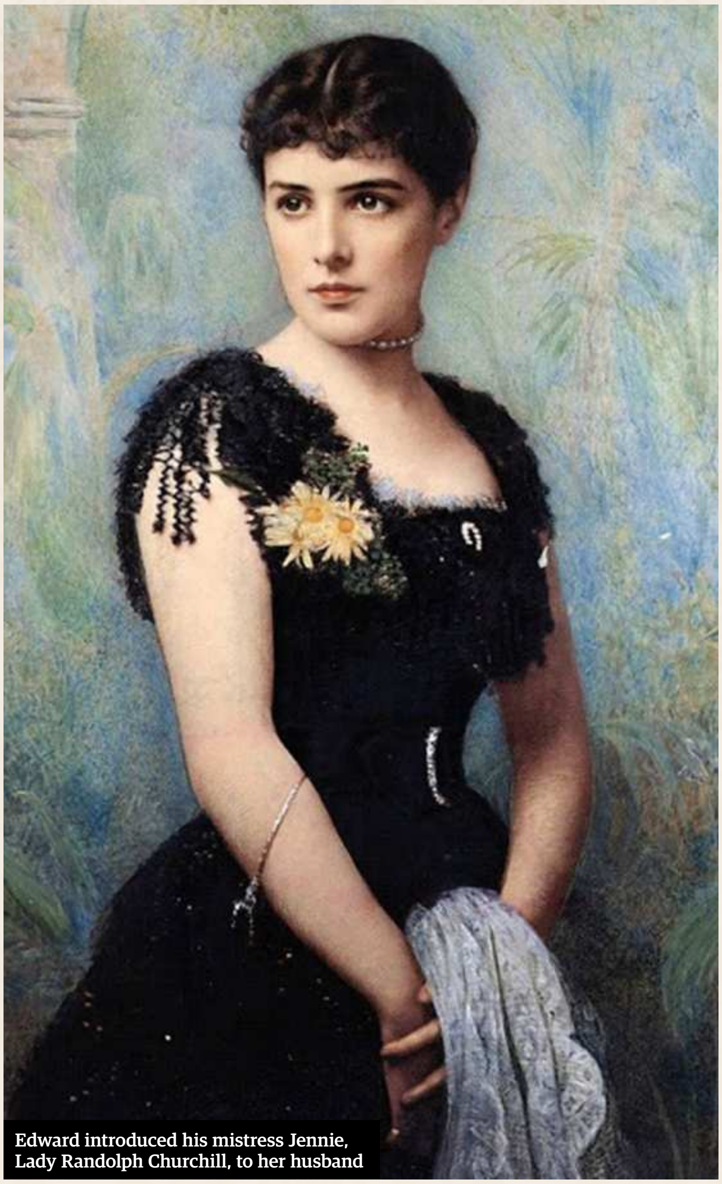
Yet it wasn't only sexual scandals in which the Prince of Wales became embroiled. In September 1890 a simple game of baccarat exploded into controversy, dragging the name of Edward through the mud with it. This was the Tranby Croft affair, and it all began when Sir William Gordon-Cumming, a lieutenant-colonel in the Scots Guards, was accused of cheating during a game of baccarat.

Alongside the Prince of Wales, Gordon-Cumming was one of a party who were staying at Tranby Croft in Yorkshire as guests of Arthur Wilson, a wealthy shipping magnate. When Gordon-Cumming was spotted apparently cheating during a game, the other players asked Edward what they should do. The prince encouraged them to confront Gordon-Cumming, who agreed to sign a document promising that he would never play cards again, so long as they told nobody what had occurred. Gordon-Cumming changed his mind about the agreement when, in 1891, allegations regarding his cheating were mysteriously leaked to the press. He demanded that the allegations against him be retracted and the matter ended up in court. Arthur Wilson was charged with defamation and Gordon-Cumming was determined to see his tarnished name cleared.

The trial became the hottest ticket in London and when Edward was called as a witness, the atmosphere in the courtroom was electric. It was the first time that an heir to the throne had been called to court since 1411 and Edward's evidence was as damning as the rest of the witnesses. The jury found against Gordon-Cumming and he was dismissed from the army and ostracised from the Marlborough House set. Yet although his side had won, for the first time, the prince knew what it was to be unpopular. He was seen as a man devoted to gambling and high-living who had destroyed the reputation or a brave soldier. Not only that, but the prince's critics wondered what else went on besides gambling and began to speculate about how the Marlborough House set might pass the time.

Edward, once an unashamed gambler, reined in his love of the card table after that. Perhaps he decided that it was less troublesome to spend his time in the arms of lovers than playing games that could lead him to court!

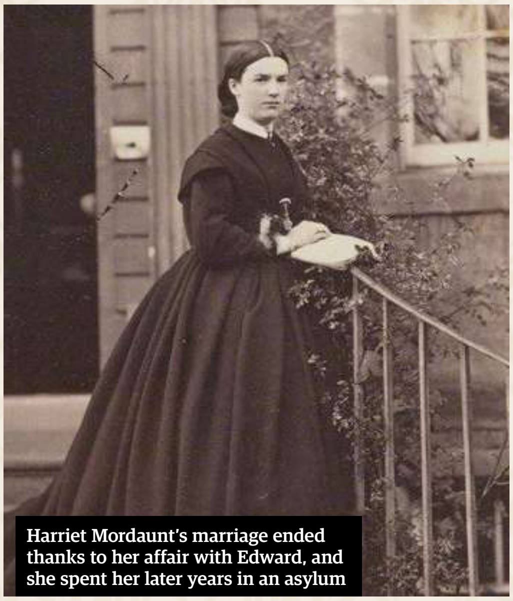
> "A simple game of baccarat exploded into controversy, dragging the name of Edward through the mud with it"



Edward introduced his mistress Jennie, Lady Randolph Churchill, to her husband

Queen Victoria wrongly blamed Edward for the death of her beloved husband, Albert

Le Chabanais, at 12 Rue Chabanais, offered its privileged clients the finest sexual pleasures



Harriet Mordaunt's marriage ended thanks to her affair with Edward, and she spent her later years in an asylum

Alice Keppel was devoted to Edward. Today her great-granddaughter, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, is the wife of the Prince of Wales

Although he had many lovers, three showed a particular devotion to Edward, or were able to prick at his social conscience. The first was Daisy Greville, Countess of Warwick, and she had just as many lovers as Edward. Daisy and the Prince of Wales were a couple for nine years and she was often seen at public engagements with the prince, taking advantage of her senior social rank to publicly accompany her lover when he was out and about. At wild parties at her Essex mansion she encouraged wife-swapping and sexual experimentation but at the same time, this dedicated pleasure seeker campaigned for social reform too. Trade unions met in her home and she ploughed her money into the fight for education and suffrage for women, using her status as a favourite of the Prince of Wales to open doors that might otherwise have remained shut. She wasn't afraid of calling on him to support those causes too, effectively becoming his first and loudest social conscience.

When his affair with Daisy Greville ended, the 56-year-old Prince of Wales then took Alice Keppel, the great-grandmother of Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, as his mistress. Alice was more than 25 years Edward's junior and the couple made no real effort to conceal their relationship from her husband, who would make himself scarce whenever the prince came to visit his wife. The affair lasted through Edward's reign and up until his death, and during this time, Alice constantly tried to improve his lifestyle and health to the very end. She shared her lover with Agnes Keyser, a courtesan who devoted her public life to humanitarian efforts and who had converted her house into a hospital for the causalities of the Boer War. Agnes became friends with Alexandra, her lover's wife, and was, to all intents and purposes, the prince's last official mistress.

Despite his mother's damning opinion of him, Edward was a popular prince and a well-loved king. Having been subjected to stern discipline and rigid education in his youth, it's hardly surprising that he revelled against the very values his parents tried to instil in him and turned instead to a life of pleasure. That he managed to do so without incurring the lasting displeasure of the public is quite something.

THE ACCESSION OF EDWARD VII

In a world in which members of the royal family are governed by an army of PR experts and wily spin doctors, keeping up appearances is everything. Yet for King Edward VII, the freewheeling, libertine son of Queen Victoria, a scandalous life did his public image no harm whatsoever

Written by Catherine Curzon

In the long history of the United Kingdom, one monarch in particular has come to embody granite-faced respectability and unswerving, usually unsmiling moral fibre. That monarch was, of course, Victoria, queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and later empress of India too. From the moment she was crowned to the moment of her death, Queen Victoria was dedicated to preserving the regality and dignity of the throne she had inherited and, with her husband, Prince Albert, ensuring that her line of succession contained not only the heir, but a whole assortment of spares besides. Throughout the 21 years of her marriage to Albert, and after his early death had left her heartbroken, Queen Victoria did all she could to ensure that the values and morality she held so dearly were inherited and practised by her children and numerous grandchildren. She might not always have been successful, but she became a powerful symbol of the British empire itself, stern, unbending and majestic.

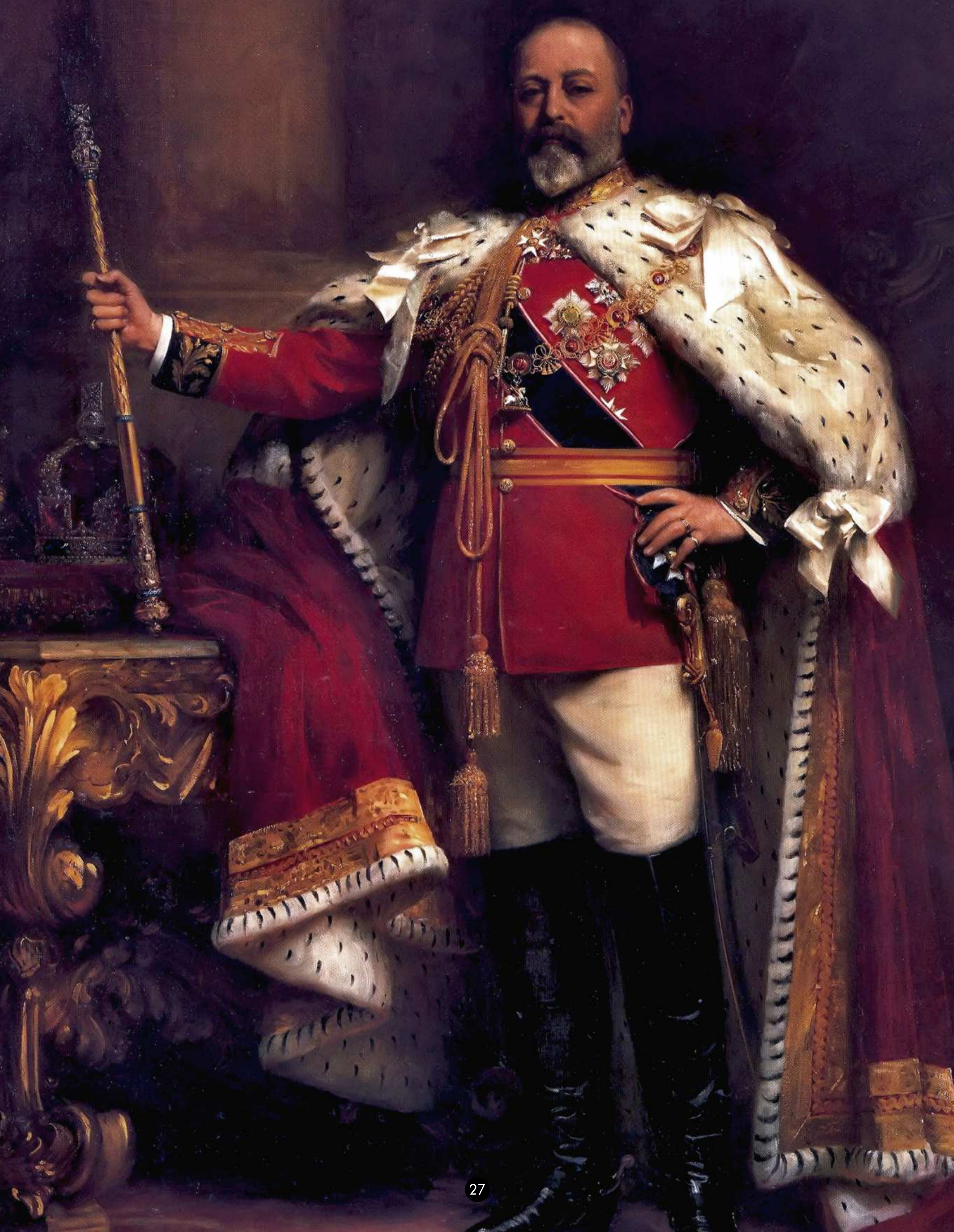
Queen Victoria's reign, the last of a monarch from the House of Hanover, lasted for a remarkable 63 years. She was mother to nine children, all of whom not only survived to adulthood but made dynastic marriages of their own. Highly educated, strictly disciplined and drilled with a rigid moral code, Victoria and her husband, Albert, were determined that their offspring would be everything that they thought the children of a monarch should be. The strictest regime of all, however, was arguably reserved for their eldest son, Edward, Prince of Wales. Edward was born in 1841 and from his earliest years, he was drilled with military precision for the crown that awaited him.

During his childhood, Bertie, as his family called him, had never been allowed to simply enjoy the life of a normal little boy. Instead he had been placed at the heart of a strict educational programme that his father, Albert, developed. Edward really did try his best to meet the demands of his parents, but he was intellectually ill-equipped to do so. Unlike his elder sister, the scholarly minded Victoria, he didn't thrive in the hothouse educational environment that Albert devised. Happy, sociable and easy in character, Edward found the routine utterly mind-numbing and failed to impress tutor after tutor, as well as his parents.

That all changed when Edward was sent to Rome in 1859, when he was just 18. Freed from the regime that had stifled him, Edward began to flourish. Upon his return, he continued his education but this time, rather than doing so under the too-watchful eye of Victoria and Albert, he enrolled at Oxford University. Here he was able to indulge his sociable side, and found that university study was far more suited to his personality and preferences than the schoolroom. He later transferred to Cambridge University where he studied history, and for the very first time in his life, really began to enjoy education. The Prince of Wales' university years were the making of him and, far from being a disappointment, he was finally able to thrive.

Though he wasn't the brightest child in the family, there can be little doubt that Edward was far and away the most charming. He became the first Prince of Wales to tour North America in 1860, and everywhere he went he won new fans and friends. It seemed that he was a born diplomat, blessed with the ability to set people from all walks of life at ease, apparently with very little effort at all.

This very social prince didn't want a life of royal duties and diplomacy, however, but was set on a career in the army. Though his parents put paid to any dreams he might have of undertaking active service, they did allow him to indulge his wishes by joining manoeuvres now and then. It was during one of these military getaways that he discovered the pleasures not of drill practice,

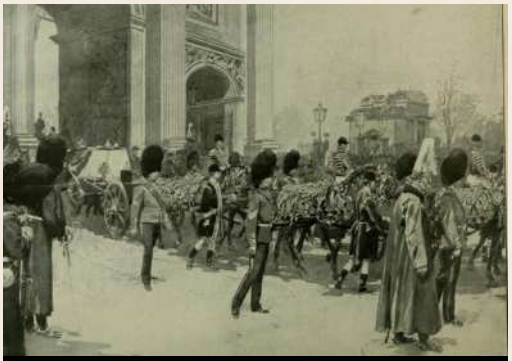


Edward often welcomed his continental relatives, including the doomed Tsar Nicholas II and his family, who visited Osborne House

> "As years passed by and Edward's love of pleasure became ever more pronounced, Queen Victoria's horror grew"

but of the flesh. After spending three passionate days with Nellie Clifden, an actress, a whole new chapter opened in Edward's life, and from that day until his death nearly half a century later, his appetite for pleasure rarely dimmed.

Although Edward married Princess Alexandra of Denmark, he remained a bona fide playboy. He and his new wife headed the so-called Marlborough House Set, a social group that gathered at the Wales' London residence from which they took their name. Alexandra accepted her husband's infidelities stoically, and if she did not quite befriend some of his long-term mistresses, she certainly accepted them and mixed in their company. She, however, remained faithful to her husband for the duration of their marriage, and was an uncomplaining wife and mother to his six children.



Crowds thronged the streets to catch a glimpse of the new king's coronation procession

Yet as the years passed by and Edward's love of pleasure became ever more pronounced, Queen Victoria's horror grew. She even blamed him for the death of his father as Albert, already suffering from the typhoid fever that would eventually kill him, ventured out in the driving rain to visit his son and give him a talking to over the Nellie Clifden affair. Albert's condition deteriorated on his return, and weeks later he was dead. Although the inclement weather had played no part in her husband's demise, Victoria would never accept that Edward hadn't been to blame. She believed that her eldest son was morally bankrupt, spent and spoiled, and in the years to come, she took every opportunity she could to remind Albert of his supposed culpability for the death of his father.

Yet Edward didn't let his mother's disapproval stop him; he simply got on with living life as he wished it to be. Though Queen Victoria had prevented him from pursuing a military career, after all, she wouldn't prevent him from indulging his love of gambling and horse racing, not to mention the company of beautiful, sometimes scandalous women.

Yet ultimately, Edward's duty and fate was to one day rule as king, and though he liked to have fun, he was also laying the foundations for a rather

Nine European sovereigns gather for the funeral of Edward VII. Among them are Wilhelm II and George V

The uncle of Europe

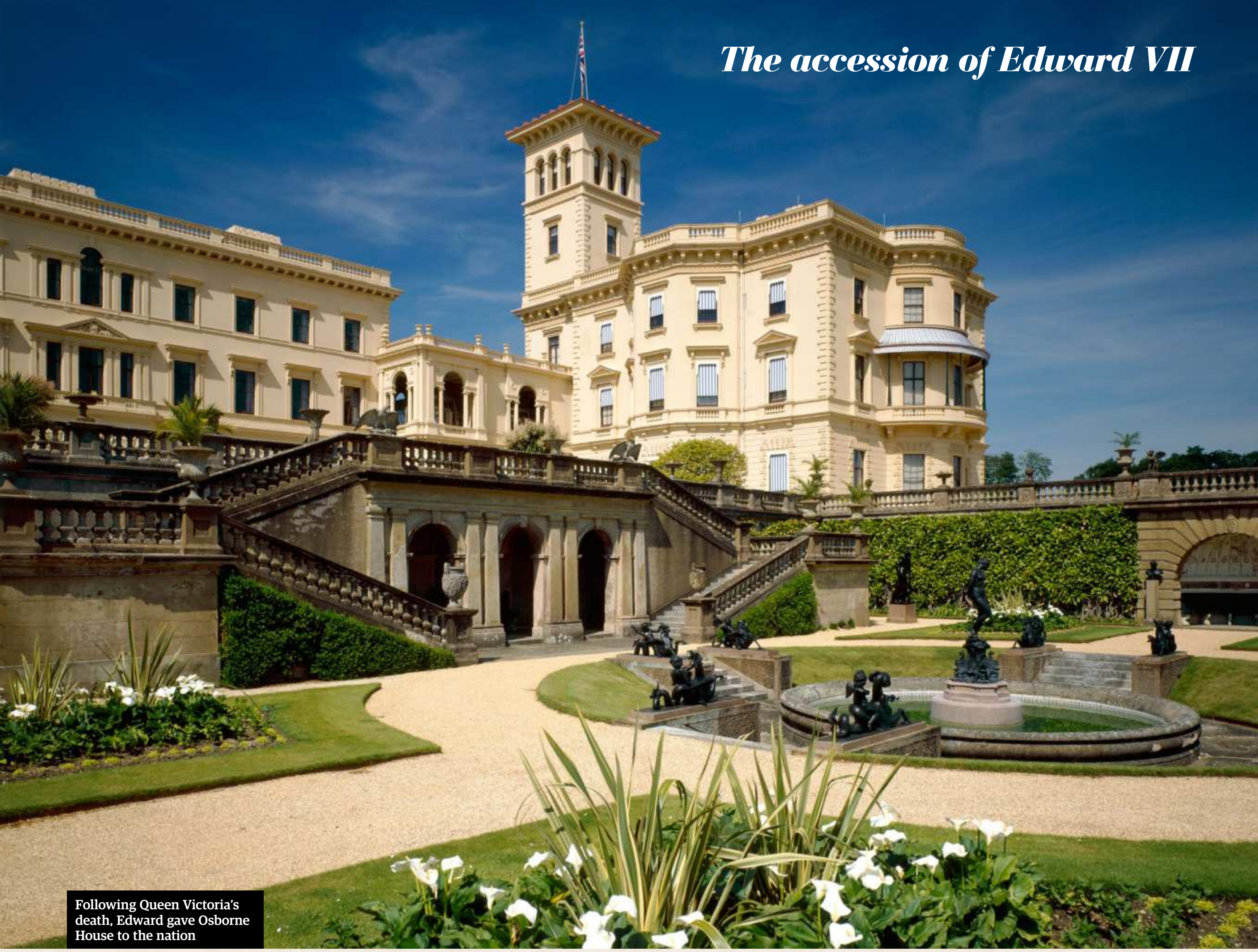
Though he hadn't been a political Prince of Wales, as king, Edward VII kept foreign affairs in the family

Thanks to decades of intermarriages with the most powerful royal houses in Europe, Edward VII was related to just about every other European monarch of his age.

Among his extended family, Edward could count Kaiser Wilhelm II, King Haakon VII of Norway and Tsar Nicholas II of Russia as nephews, while his nieces could be found in the palaces of Spain, Sweden and other countries. His second cousins ruled Bulgaria, Belgium and Portugal, and the list goes on.

With so much power to play with, there were family tensions to spare. Wilhelm II was bitterly jealous of Edward VII, who enjoyed a popularity across Europe that he could never emulate. When Edward took an interest in foreign affairs, Wilhelm convinced himself that it was a deliberate plot to isolate Germany.

Although Victoria had hoped that the intermarriages would keep peace in Europe, she was proven wrong. After Edward's death, his successor, George V, was even less friendly with the Kaiser, who believed that an Anglo-Russian bond existed between his cousins, George and Nicholas, that kept him excluded. When World War I broke out, these familial tensions made any peaceful solution impossible. Despite their shared blood, the three cousins took Europe to war.



Following Queen Victoria's death, Edward gave Osborne House to the nation

popular reign. He was the first royal to popularise the official visits that we know so well today, appearing at the opening of public buildings and high-profile, public events, but Victoria did not approve of any of this. She saw him as frivolous and too keen on courting a public to whom he should be showing a far more serious, formal face. She did all that she could to sideline him when it came to affairs of state, but by 1898 – the year after she celebrated her diamond jubilee – Queen Victoria recognised that her long reign was not going to last forever. She reluctantly relinquished just a little of the control she had kept on parliamentary matters, and though Edward still wasn't given any power to make decisions, for the first time, the Prince of Wales was finally allowed to at least see the papers that his mother received from the government.

On 30 July 1900, Queen Victoria's second son, Alfred, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, died of throat cancer. He was the third of Victoria's children to die, and his loss hit the elderly monarch hard. She withdrew to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, where she and Albert had been so happy during their marriage, and mourned for her son. Her health had been in decline for years, and during the first months of 1901, she grew sicker than ever.

With her health failing at a rapid rate, Queen Victoria had come a long way from the 18-year-old girl who had ascended the throne so many years earlier. After more than six decades at the helm, she had become a symbol of Britain and its vastly expanded empire, seemingly as permanent and immovable as the land itself. Her reign had been a welcome period of stability after years of scandalous kings, and she had devoted herself to her realms. Britain was one of the mightiest nations the world had ever seen, and across the globe, the queen herself had come to embody everything that her nation stood for.

The idea of someone other than Queen Victoria sitting on the British throne was unthinkable, yet she was far from immortal. As 1901 dawned, Victoria remained at Osborne House. Rheumatism had left her virtually immobile, and cataracts had clouded her vision, rendering her almost blind. Bedridden and weak, the queen was joined by her children and grandson, Kaiser Wilhelm II, all of them awaiting the inevitable end.

Queen Victoria died early in the evening of 22 January 1901, with Wilhelm and Edward at her

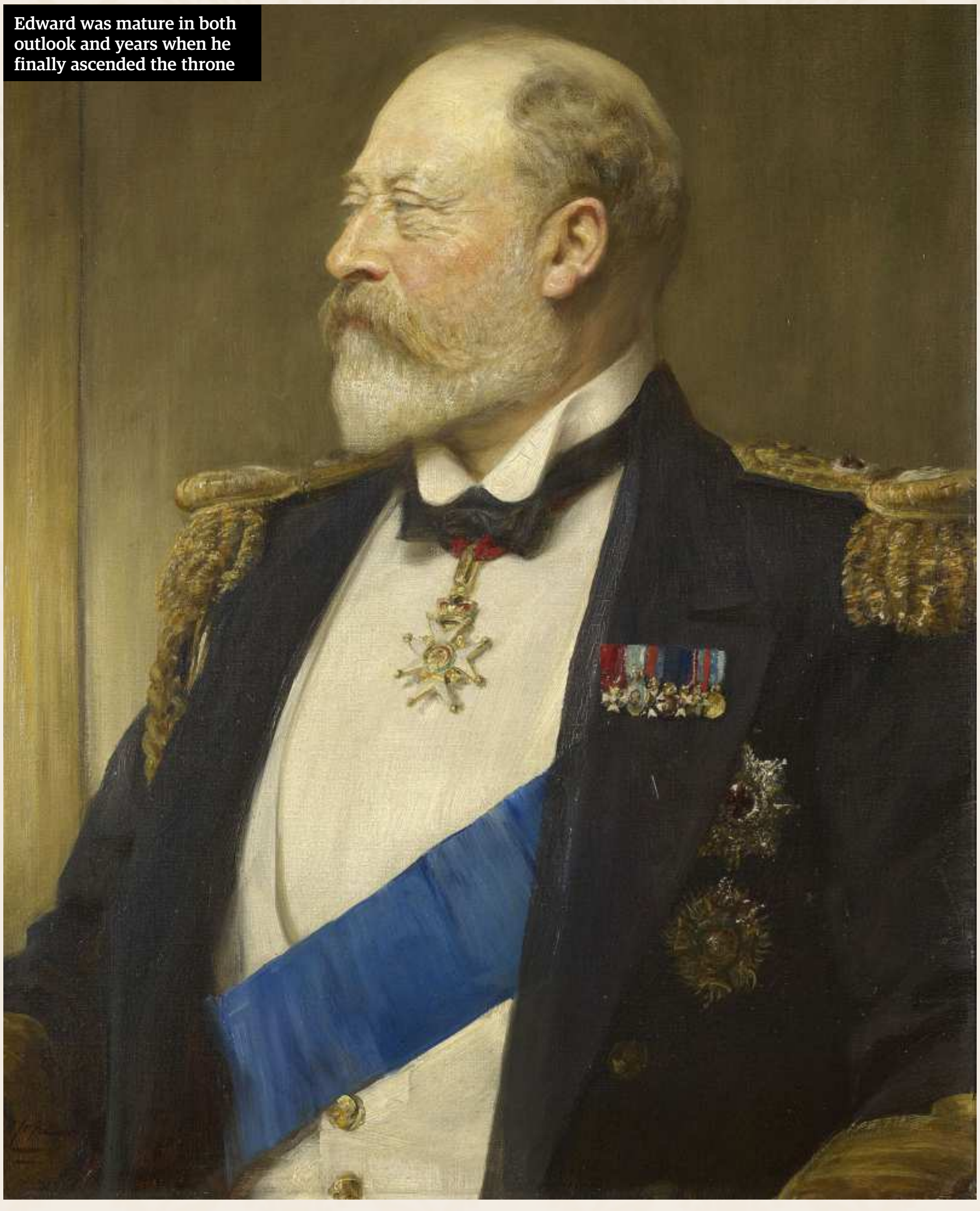
The newly crowned King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra were enormously popular with their subjects bedside, and her beloved dog, Turi, laid on the bed beside her. She was 81 years old, and had spent nearly 64 years of her life as queen. It truly was the end of an era.

As one would expect, Victoria had left instructions for her own funeral, and she laid to rest beside her late husband at Windsor, according to her wishes. Her death shook the public, as though they had expected her to live forever, and now that she was gone, the future looked a little uncertain. The Prince of Wales certainly had very big shoes to fill.

When Edward ascended the throne of the United Kingdom, also becoming emperor of India and king of the British Dominions, he was 59 years old. His mother had always intended for her son to take the name of King Albert Edward in recognition of his father, but instead he chose to become Edward VII. Though we might speculate over the precise reasons that he didn't wish to memorialise his father in his official monicker, Edward explained that his father's name and reputation should stand alone as testament to a great man.

Popular or not though, Edward's coronation was prevented from going ahead on its scheduled date of 24 June 1902 after he was diagnosed with appendicitis just two days before the ceremony. Following a risky emergency operation, however, Edward's fans were told that the new king was already enjoying a cigar, and best of all there was no cause to worry, for there was no trace of any more serious complaint. Edward was finally crowned at Westminster Abbey on 9 August 1902, and across his kingdom, his loyal subjects celebrated their populist new monarch.

Edward VII began his reign in a tidal wave of public popularity thanks to his years as Prince of Wales, providing the colourful and charming counterpoint to his dour, permanently grieving mother. Though his youthful years had been filled with scandal and gossip, he had managed to avoid inviting public derision by keeping his liaisons mainly to his own social set, where his behaviour was certainly far from unusual. What the public knew of his affairs could be dismissed as idle gossip should it be necessary, but equally he had not allowed any of his personal entanglements to have an impact on his constitutional duties.

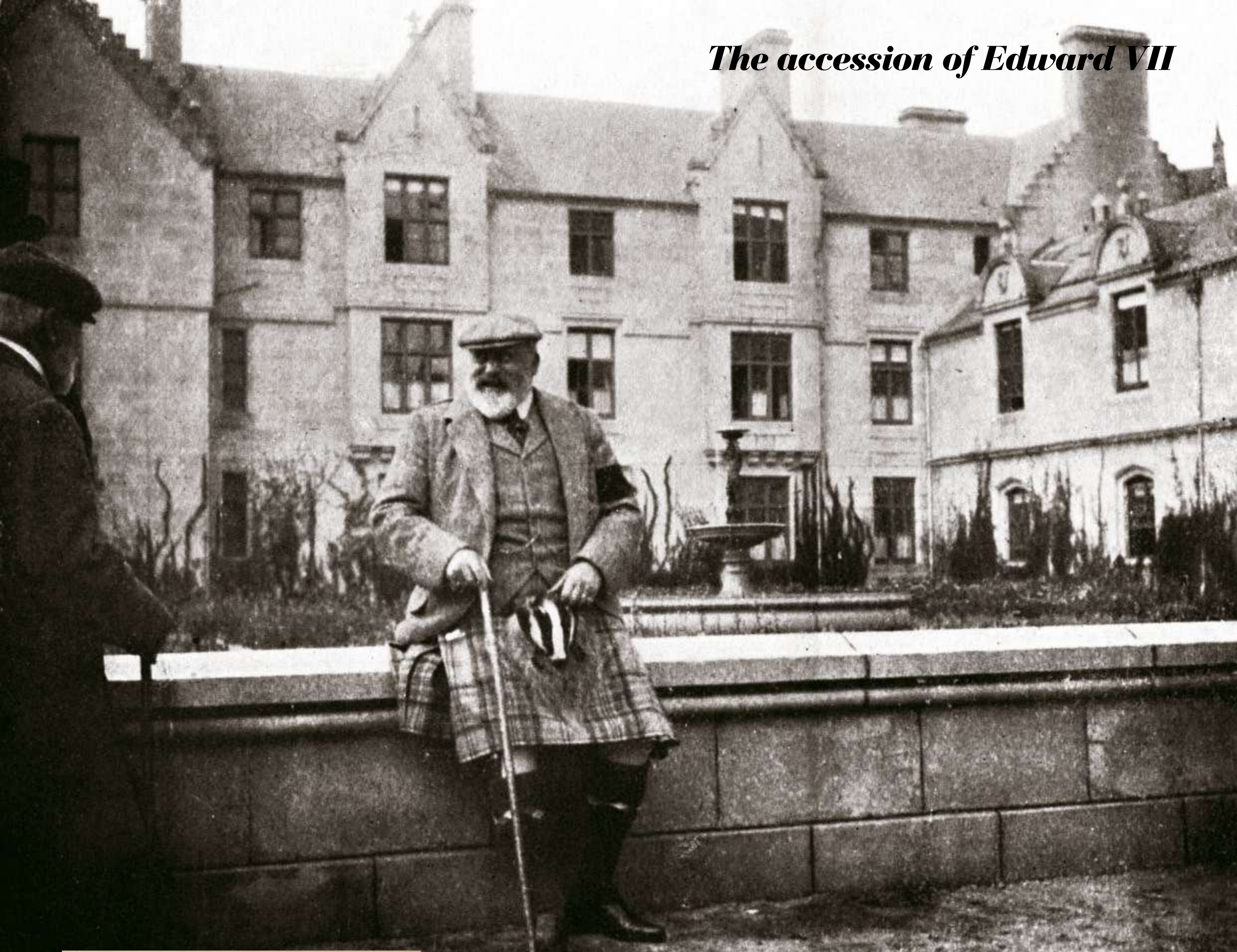


Edward was mature in both outlook and years when he finally ascended the throne

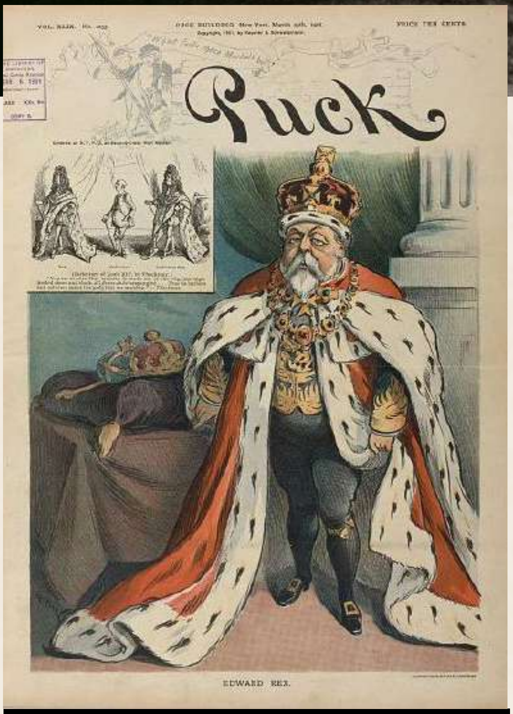
Edward VII loved tradition, and his coronation spared no pomp and ceremony

Mature in years and outlook, happily married and known for his diplomatic manner, Edward was an outgoing and sociable king. In that sense, he was the opposite of Victoria. His wife, Alexandra, had long since been a public favourite too, often filling in for her mother-in-law at social and public occasions when the queen's health kept her from attending. They really were seen as something of a golden couple, and the public and government hoped that King Edward VII wouldn't have any intention of rocking a steady ship. During his long years as Prince of Wales, Edward had wisely chosen not to ally himself with any political party, and showed no signs of having any favourites on the left or right. Instead, he had remained virtually neutral, dedicated to diplomacy, which – for a man possessed of such natural charm – was an easy task for Edward.

The new king donated Osborne House to the nation, and it was used as a Royal Navy training college for years. He also enjoyed a reputation as a prudent financial manager, and was the first monarch in generations to succeed to the throne without being in debt. Had Edward succeeded earlier and been on the throne through innumerable love affairs, infidelities and a love of lavish gambling, of course, his public perception might well have been rather different. Yet the years spent as Prince of Wales had achieved precisely what Victoria and Albert's strict and unswerving education and discipline had not. Time and diplomatic experience had trained Edward in the



Though Edward VII wasn't fond of politics, he loved to socialise



He might be popular, but that didn't stop *Punch* from poking fun at Edward VII's flamboyant robes

> "He was a completely different proposition to Victoria, and in a time of uncertainty… he was a breath of fresh air"

ways of kingship, and prepared him to take the crown of one of the world's superpowers. He certainly took his new role very seriously, but he never ceased to be the same good-natured, affable gent that had returned from Rome and embarked on a very high life all those years ago.

Though his reign was over within nine years, King Edward VII was loved by the people of the United Kingdom. Despite or perhaps because of his unashamed love of the good life, he was a completely different proposition to Victoria, and in a time of uncertainty following the death of that institution of the monarchy, he was a breath of fresh air. He refurbished crumbling royal residences, brought back traditions that his insular mother had set aside, and championed initiatives to improve education and foster a new scientific and artistic landscape.

King Edward VII died on 6 May 1910 after a series of heart attacks. Typically for the fun-loving king, he managed to keep breathing just long enough to learn that his horse, Witch of the Air, had romped home as first past the post at Kempton Park. That was the last victory that Edward VII ever celebrated, and as he lay in state awaiting burial, 400,000 members of the public filed past his coffin and paid their last, heartfelt respects.

© Getty

Though he might have looked every inch a prince, Albert Victor was mocked as an unintelligent dullard

THE HEIR WHO DIED

Of all the children of Edward VII and Alexandra's brood, none caused so much strife as the first-born son and heir

Written by Catherine Curzon

Edward VII inherited the throne in 1901 from his mother, Queen Victoria, who is remembered as one of the most upright and rabidly monarchs Great Britain had ever seen. Though Edward might have inherited her crown, he certainly didn't inherit her ironclad morals. With a brace of mistresses, a love of gambling and even a private room in the most exclusive brothel in Paris, there was nothing he loved as much as the high life. Yet Edward VII was a husband and father as well as king, and with his wife, Alexandra, he had six children. Although one of them, Alexander John, didn't survive infancy, his three sisters and two brothers flourished.

Edward and Alexandra's eldest child was Prince Albert Victor, who was known as Eddy. Though he died young, Albert Victor survived more scandal than his siblings would see in a lifetime.

Albert Victor was not an academically accomplished child, and he abandoned education for the forces as a member of the 10th Hussars. He rarely undertook any public duties and, unlike his popular father, Albert Victor had few fans. That situation only got worse when he had his first taste of scandal, and as the prince was dragged into a sordid court case, his name was on every gossip's lips.

The case began in July 1889 when police constable Luke Hanks was called in to investigate a theft that had taken place in the London Central Telegraph Office. In the course of his investigation, he questioned a 15-year-old telegraph boy named Charles Thomas Swinscow and discovered that he was in possession of a large amount of money. Hanks immediately suspected that Swinscow was behind the theft, but in fact he had just unwittingly blown the lid off a far greater scandal.

Swinscow told Hanks that he hadn't stolen the money, but had earned it as a prostitute in a male brothel situated at 19 Cleveland Street, Marylebone. The brothel was owned and operated by a man named Charles Hammond, and Hammond regularly recruited from among the telegraph boys, using other employees of the Telegraph Office to identify likely employees. Homosexuality and the procurement of homosexuality was illegal at the time and punishable with imprisonment and hard labour, so Hanks reported his findings to his superiors.

The case was handed to detective inspector Frederick Abberline, famous for his involvement in the Jack the Ripper case. Abberline visited 19 Cleveland Street and found the house locked up, with Hammond having long since fled after receiving an anonymous tip off. Abberline was able to arrest Henry Newlove though, an 18-year-old clerk at the General Post Office who had introduced Hammond to Swinscow and several other young men who went on to work at Cleveland Street.

Safe in custody, Newlove began to reveal the names of the brothel's clients. Among the titled gentlemen was one Lord Arthur Somerset. Somerset just happened to be the head of the stables in the household of Albert Victor, the son of the then Prince of Wales. Perhaps mindful of Somerset's connections, no move was made to arrest him, though he was questioned. Instead, Abberline concentrated his efforts on Hammond, and as the net tightened, the police arrested George Veck, a former employee at the Telegraph Office. Veck led the investigation to other prostitutes who named their clients and among those, once again, was the well-connected Lord Arthur Somerset.

Somerset was questioned again. This time when he was released, he headed straight for Germany and a holiday with the royal family. Though Somerset briefly returned to England, when a warrant for his arrest was issued he fled again. This time he didn't return, but instead opted to spend the rest of his life in quiet luxury on the French Riviera. When Newlove and Veck were put on trial, however, they were defended by Somerset's solicitor, and Somerset paid their legal bills in full. Of course, none of this went unnoticed by the press, and by the time the defendants were sentenced to between two and four months' hard labour, the newspapers were making some very pointed remarks about the noblemen whose names had been implicated. Of particular interest was an unnamed but oft-mentioned figure of a very high rank who was a regular at Cleveland Street. With Somerset's connections and the mystery behind the anonymous VIP, the circumstantial evidence was pointing to the insular and unpopular Albert Victor, the Duke of Clarence.

The relative leniency of the sentencing didn't escape gossips either, nor the ease with which Hammond escaped justice and fled for America. Suspicions of a cover-up were heightened when the British prime minister, Lord Salisbury, personally intervened to decide that Hammond shouldn't face extradition. All outstanding charges against him were dropped and he was allowed to go free, but why? Was it because he had some embarrassing testimony that might come out in court, including names that would rock the establishment? If that was the case, were rumours that Albert Victor was among Cleveland Street's clients true?

Should Albert Victor be revealed to be a client of a male brothel, the implications for the royal family were immense. It would make the heir to the throne a criminal and in a land where homosexuality was illegal, he would be regarded by his subjects as a degenerate. Anonymous letters sent to Edward seemed to suggest that his son was involved, and even if he was immune to prosecution, the already unpopular Albert Victor couldn't afford to be linked to Cleveland Street.

In this family portrait, Edward VII and Alexandra are joined by their children to give the perfect image of a royal family in repose

Mindful of being taken to court if they named names, British newspapers shied away from reporting the case and suspicions around it in any real detail. However, the case just wouldn't die, and with dozens of suspects now being pursued, one enterprising journalist took an interest. He was Ernest Parke and he was the first person to run the story in detail. Though he didn't name names at first, his follow-up stories did, and alongside Henry James FitzRoy, who was earl of Euston and moved in royal circles, Parke mentioned the involvement of an unnamed person who enjoyed an even higher rank. This person, he said, had helped Hammond and some of the prostitutes flee Britain. According to Parke, the anonymous VIP was also behind the prime minister's decision to intervene in Hammond's case and quash the charges against him. The obvious candidate for the unnamed brothel visitor was Albert Victor. His father, Edward, Prince of Wales, was next in line to the throne. It was certainly possible that Edward had personally engineered a cover up and asked Lord Liverpool to smother the case just to keep his eldest son's name out of the papers and the courts. Such a cover up would save the monarchy a potentially catastrophic embarrassment.

> "The obvious candidate for the unnamed brothel visitor was Albert Victor"

The earl of Euston launched a libel suit against Parke. Euston admitted visiting Hammond at Cleveland Street but claimed that he had expected to find not boys, but an artistic display of posed female nudes. Upon discovering the true nature of the establishment, Euston claimed he made his excuses and left. Despite testimony from the prostitutes who had serviced him, the jury ruled in Euston's favour and Parke was found guilty. Yet the allegation of a cover-up stuck, and when Somerset's solicitor, Arthur Newton, was charged with obstruction of justice, it gathered speed again. He was found guilty and sentenced to six weeks in prison, but he was allowed to continue practising and a few years later, would represent Oscar Wilde when he was arrested for gross indecency.

Newton, some speculated, must have mentioned Albert Victor's name to someone in the know, hoping that he could buy his freedom in exchange for a promise not to name Albert Victor in court. Perhaps it was a subtle attempt at blackmail, invoking the name of the heir to the throne to ensure that the same intervention that had saved Hammond might keep him from prison too. Might Newton have been the person behind those anonymous letters to the Prince of Wales? After all, once the letters began to appear, there was a suspicious lack of arrests, and ultimately none of Cleveland Street's supposed patrons were ever prosecuted. Whether Albert Victor was involved or not, he and his father certainly wouldn't want the royal family to be implicated in a homosexual brothel scandal either way.

With Parke's libel case still ringing in their ears, the British press fell silent, but the foreign press was not so delicate. When Albert Victor was sent on an extended tour of India in late 1889, it was regarded as an establishment ploy to cover up his involvement and keep himself out of the public eye. If that were the case, it didn't work, for all it did was arouse more suspicion. Whatever the truth of the matter, whether Albert Victor visited Cleveland Street, let alone whether he was homosexual or even bisexual, has never been established one way or the other. Despite this, to

Princess Maud of Wales was the youngest surviving child of Edward VII, and became queen of Norway by marriage

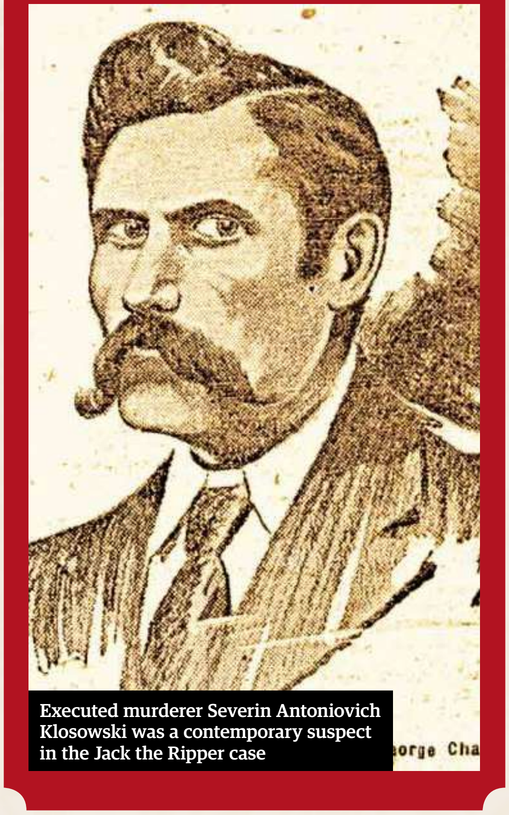
Jack the Ripper?

Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, was just one name linked to the infamous serial killer

Albert Victor is not the only man whose name has been linked with the unsolved case of Jack the Ripper. He shares that dubious honour with innumerable other candidates, including Queen Victoria's physician, Sir William Withey Gull, celebrated artist Walter Sickert, and Albert Victor's old tutor, James Kenneth Stephen. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wondered whether the murderer might actually be a woman, suggesting that a midwife would be trusted by the victims and possess the medical knowledge that the killings appear to demonstrate.

Inspector Frederick Abberline, the officer who led the Cleveland Street investigation, was also a senior figure in the hunt for Jack the Ripper. His prime suspect was Severin Antoniovich Klosowski, a Polish-born serial killer who lived in England. Going by the name of George Chapman, Klosowski fatally poisoned three women before being apprehended and executed in 1903. Although undoubtedly a violent misogynist, no hard evidence has been uncovered that can tie Klosowski to the Ripper murders.

More than a century after five innocent women were brutally murdered, theories continue to be put forward as to who was responsible. The ghoulish fascination that the public has with Jack the Ripper shows no sign of fading.



Executed murderer Severin Antoniovich Klosowski was a contemporary suspect in the Jack the Ripper case

Molly houses

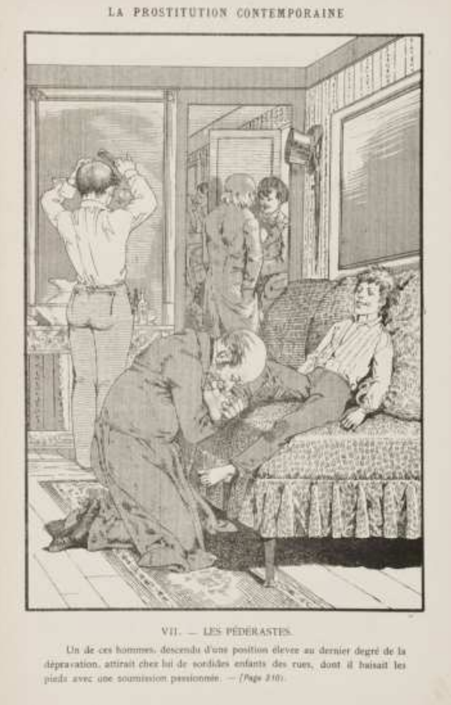
The male brothel at Cleveland Street might have been a scandal, but it wasn't the first of its kind

In the 18th and 19th centuries, homosexual men weren't able to meet in public for fear of arrest and punishment. Instead, they gathered at molly-houses, taverns and private spaces where they could socialise without fear of persecution.

In a world in which homosexuality was a capital offence until 1861, the molly-houses were a welcome place where men could finally be themselves and, hopefully, meet friends and intimate acquaintances. Perhaps the most famous was Mother Clap's molly-house, which was raided in 1726. Its owner, Margaret Clap, was pilloried, and three of her male customers were hanged.

Although sex was certainly an aspect of molly-houses, they weren't necessarily brothels. In the eyes of the law, however, that distinction wasn't so clear, and molly-houses and brothels became intrinsically linked in the mind of the public.

The most famous male prostitute is probably John Saul, an Irishman who was involved in the Cleveland Street scandal as well as a shocking 1884 incident in which orgies were uncovered at Dublin Castle. Saul became a popular character in Victorian pornography before he retired to go into domestic service. He worked as a butler for several years and died in 1904, aged just 46.


LA PROSTITUTION CONTEMPORAINE
VII. — LES PÉDÉRASTES.
Un de ces hommes, descendu d'une position élevée au dernier degré de la dépravation, attirait chez lui de sordides enfants des rues, dont il baisait les pieds avec une soumission passionnée. — (Page 310).

Male brothels and molly-houses held a forbidden fascination for Victorian scandal-mongers

Albert Victor died before he could marry Mary of Teck. She went on to marry his brother, George

this day Albert Victor's name remains associated with Cleveland Street.

Unfortunately, one thing that the Cleveland Street scandal did do was reinforce the idea of homosexuality as something to be punished. It gave the impression that the majority of homosexuals were vice-ridden, wealthy playboys who had been corrupted by money and privilege. With a focus on the clients, the exploitation of Cleveland Street's young prostitutes went mostly unremarked. This was a belief that persevered for years to follow.

After his return from India, the prince drifted into an affair with a Gaiety girl named Lydia Miller who committed suicide by drinking carbolic acid. In order to keep Albert Victor's name out of the press, Lord Charles Montagu claimed that Miller had been his mistress, but her affair with the prince was an open secret. However, the British press was hesitant about naming Albert Victor just as they had been during the Cleveland Street case. Overseas newspapers weren't nearly so sensitive and were quick to name Albert Victor as Lydia Miller's lover, which was even more fuel for his unpopularity.

Albert Victor died in the influenza pandemic of 1891, just as plans were being made for him to marry Princess Mary of Teck. Dull, indolent, apparently lacking in intelligence and unpopular with the public, his death gave rise to a collection of conspiracy theories that alleged murder and all manner of wrongdoing. In fact, it was nothing of the sort. Albert Victor was simply one of thousands who fell victim to the pandemic that swept the nation.

Yet even in death scandals found him, as a woman named Margery Haddon came forward to allege that the prince was the father of her adult son, Clarence. She said that she had enjoyed an affair with Albert Victor during his Indian tour and that Clarence was the result of their fling. Although the royal family's lawyers admitted that there had been a relationship of some sort, no evidence was ever presented to support Margery's claims of paternity.

Clarence later repeated the allegations in a book, and in 1933 he was charged with extortion after asking George V for money in return for his silence. Both Clarence and his mother were believed to have been suffering from delusions, and their claims were roundly dismissed. That wasn't the end of Albert Victor's brush with gossip, though, and the next allegations against him were far more serious.

In the years following Albert Victor's death, his name became one of several suspects in the unsolved case of Jack the Ripper. Theories put forward in the 1960s alleged that Albert Victor had fathered a child with a Whitechapel prostitute, and that the Ripper's victims knew the secret and had to be silenced at all costs. Whenever Albert Victor's diary didn't marry up with the Ripper's activities, the theory was amended slightly to allege that he had a gang of co-conspirators who carried out the killings for him. While the theory is certainly dramatic, it wilfully ignores generations of illegitimate royal children whose existence was openly acknowledged, including those of heirs to the throne. It's a classic case of a theory that doesn't let facts get in the way of a good story.

> "Following Albert's death, his name became one of several suspects in the case of Jack the Ripper"

Prince Albert Victor packed so much scandal into his 28 years, it's a wonder he found time for anything else. When he died, his brother, George, became heir to the throne. In 1910 he was crowned king, a rank he held until his death in 1936.

Louise, Princess Royal, was the eldest daughter of Edward and Alexandra and was, no doubt to their great relief, entirely without scandal. In fact, she was the model royal daughter and at the age of 22, she married Alexander Duff. Nearly two decades her senior, Duff was already a member of the peerage, and within days of the marriage, Queen Victoria named him 1st Duke of Fife. The happily married couple had two daughters and a son, who was stillborn, but their marriage was

The five surviving children of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, grandchildren of Victoria and Albert

Albert Victor, photographed alongside his younger brother George, who later became George V

short. Following a shipwreck in 1911, the duke fell ill with pleurisy. He died in January 1912, leaving his wife to inherit his title and become Duchess of Fife. She lived in unscandalous peace for a further 17 years, eventually dying in 1931.

Princess Victoria of the United Kingdom, the fourth child of the king and queen, was similarly well-behaved. Known as Toria, despite being courted by suitors including King Carlos I of Portugal, she remained unmarried and lived at home as her mother's companion until Queen Alexandra's death in 1925. Only then did Princess Victoria strike out alone and move to the village of Coppins in Buckinghamshire, where she lived in happy seclusion. Toria died in December 1935 and was buried at Frogmore. A month later, her brother, George V, also died, his heart broken by the loss of the sister he had adored.

The youngest surviving child of Edward VII and Alexandra was Maud of Wales. She married Prince Carl of Denmark, and when he was chosen to become king of Norway and was crowned Haakon VII, Maud became his queen. Queen Maud and King Haakon had just one child, Prince Alexander. He later reigned as Olav V of Norway, and Queen Maud became a formidable figure in the Scandinavian court. She was devoted to philanthropy and even championed the first home for unmarried mothers in Norway, which was seen as a highly radical move at the time.

Maud was happy in her adopted land, but she always considered England home, and made annual trips back to her native land. Her last public appearance was in England, when she attended the coronation of her nephew, George VI, in 1937. Perhaps fittingly, Queen Maud finally took her last breath in her beloved homeland after falling ill during a visit in October 1938. She was the last of Edward VII's children to pass away; none of them had lived longer than 70 years.

When measured against the relatively staid behaviour of his siblings, especially his sisters, Albert Victor emerges as a man who was no stranger to the pleasures of the flesh. An emotionally distant figure, academically average at best, rarely mixing with the public or moving outside of his own social set, he had none of the charm and affability that made his father, Edward VII, and his brother, George V, so popular. It was this insularity and awkward demeanour that led to the rumours and suspicions surrounding him, but over the years, nothing has emerged to tie him unquestionably to the most outrageous.

From Cleveland Street to Jack the Ripper to suicidal mistresses and beyond, Albert Victor attracted rumours of scandal like a magnet. Had he lived to be crowned king, we can only speculate on what new dramas might have engulfed the monarchy or on how effective a sovereign he might have been. In the end, it's all idle speculation, for Albert Victor never had the opportunity to prove himself as a king, and with George V on the throne instead, Great Britain hurtled head-first into the tumultuous 20th century.

© Getty

THE BIRTH OF THE WINDSORS

80
HANDS OFF
OUR
KING
ABDICATION
MEANS
REVOLUTION

40 Dawn of a new dynasty
As bombs dropped and cities burned across his nation, George V shrugged his Germanic roots and redefined his dynasty as an age-old institution

42 A very ordinary king
Scandal, revolution and war all threatened Europe's major ruling dynasty, but miraculously it survived

50 The secret prince
Prince John disappeared from history after his early death, but in life he was a treasured member of the Windsors

56 Despair for the heir
The scandalous behaviour of Edward, Prince of Wales led his father, King George V, to fear for the very future of the House of Windsor

62 Bertie in love
Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon would prove a fine example of that old saying, "hard to get", after refusing the hand of Bertie not just once, but twice

68 The happy hope of 'us four'
The duke and duchess of York loved their life at their cosy London base, and it became a refuge as the Windsors headed into choppy waters

74 The unquiet passing of a king
George V's death was seen as the gentle end of an era, but his last day held a dramatic secret only revealed half a century later

76 Public love, private angst
Edward VIII was a popular monarch, but from the moment of his accession doubts existed behind palace doors

80 A life of scandal
She's remembered as the woman who almost brought down the British monarchy, but Wallis lived on the edge of morality

86 The king's speech
As the prospect of the Crown loomed for Bertie, questions were raised as to whether he would be able to speak for his nation

92 George VI's last stand
As Hitler's forces decimated Europe, Britain's king became a figurehead for the fight against fascism

x Order of succession

Marriage

Divorced

DAWN OF A NEW DYNASTY

As bombs dropped and cities burned across his nation, George V shrugged his Germanic roots and redefined his dynasty as an age-old British institution

2

EDWARD VIII

1894-1972
1936

After his father's death, Edward became king. However, he abdicated before the year was out, determined to marry Wallis Simpson.

WALLIS SIMPSON

1896-1986

A twice-divorced American, Wallis came between King Edward and his crown. The couple lived the rest of their life in France.

3

GEORGE VI

1895-1952
1936-1952

A timid man, Albert (nicknamed Bertie) never relished being king – however, his loyalty to his country never wavered.

ELIZABETH BOWES-LYON

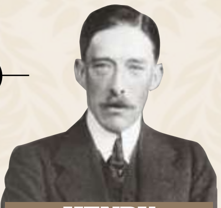
1900-2002

As queen, Elizabeth was the face of British resilience, with Hitler himself calling her "the most dangerous woman in Europe".

MARY

1897-1965

Mary was close to her eldest brother and continued to champion him after he was shunned following the Abdication Crisis.



HENRY LASCELLES

1882-1947

A soldier and landowner, Henry served on the front line during World War I. In 1922, he married the king's only daughter.

4

ELIZABETH II

1926-NOW
1952-NOW

The first granddaughter to George V, Elizabeth was the apple of his eye and lifted his moods throughout his illness.

MARGARET

1930-2002

Margaret completed the happy family but rumours that she was both deaf and mute plagued the Windsors until 1934.

GEORGE

1923-2011

George served in World War II but was captured by Germans and sentenced to death in 1944. He was later released.

GERALD

1924-1998

After ending his first marriage, Gerald wed his long-time mistress in Austria. The two already had a son out of wedlock.

GEORGE V

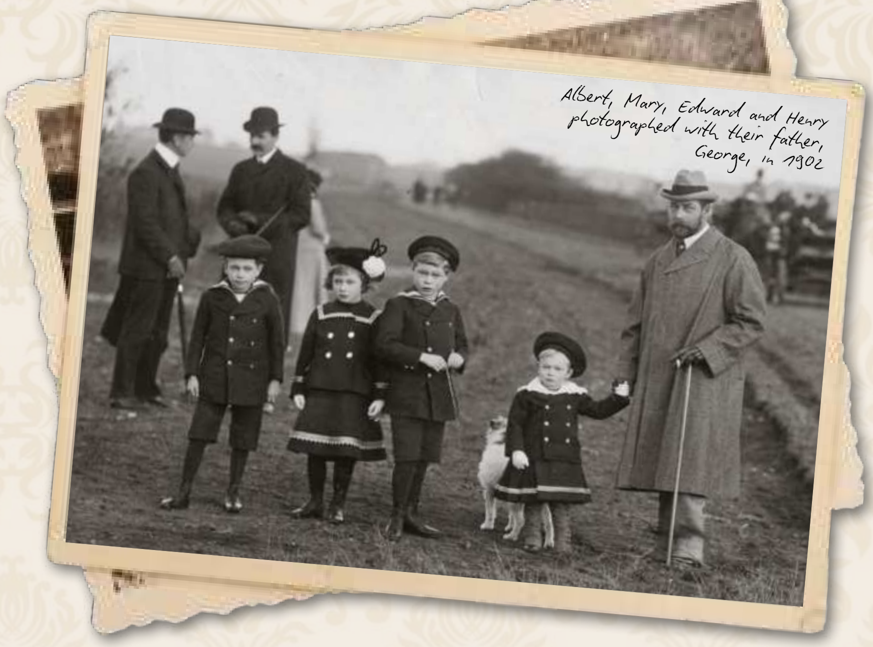
1865-1936
1910-1936

As king, George V was determined to bring a sense of respectability back to the monarchy after the debauchery of Edward VII's rule.

MARY OF TECK

1867-1953

In public, Mary came across as aloof and strict, but she was a devoted mother and was heartbroken when her youngest son died.



Albert, Mary, Edward and Henry photographed with their father, George, in 1902

HENRY OF GLOUCESTER

1900-1974

Chosen as Princess Elizabeth's regent in case of emergency, Henry was beloved and trusted by his older brother, George VI.

ALICE MONTAGUE

1901-2004

Descended directly from King Charles II, Alice married into the Windsors in 1935. While shy, she was famed for her dry sense of humour.

GEORGE, DUKE OF KENT

1902-1942

A passionate flier, George earned his pilot license in 1929 and flew with the Royal Air Force. He died in a plane crash in 1942.

MARINA OF GREECE AND DENMARK

1906-1968

Princess Marina was and continues to be regarded as a style icon. She died at Kensington Palace of a brain tumour.

JOHN

1905-1919

Dying young, Prince John's life was consumed by his epilepsy, and in his later years he rarely appeared in public.

WILLIAM

1941-1972

William fell in love with Zsuzsi Starkloff, a divorced model. Their relationship continued until he died in a plane crash in 1972.

RICHARD

1944-NOW

Having studied architecture at Cambridge, Richard gave up a promising career after his brother's death.

EDWARD

1935-NOW

Cousin to Queen Elizabeth II, Edward continues to take part in official engagements on behalf of the family.

ALEXANDRA

1936-NOW

Like her elder brother, Alexandra represents the Queen at official engagements. She toured Australia extensively in 1959.

MICHAEL

1942-NOW

Distantly related to the Romanovs, when their bodies were exhumed he volunteered his own DNA to help with the identification.

A VERY ORDINARY KING

Scandal, revolution and war all threatened Europe's major royal dynasty, but miraculously it survived – thanks to one very ordinary man

Written by Nick Soldinger

On 6 May 1935, a glorious late spring day, the sun shone down brightly on the thousands who lined London's bunting-strewn streets to celebrate George V's Silver Jubilee. As his carriage passed, they waved flags and cheered wildly for their king. Indeed, the usually frosty monarch found his heart melting, such was the outpouring of affection for him. So much so that when he reached St Paul's Cathedral, where the archbishop of Canterbury was waiting to lead a service of thanksgiving for him, the king confided his dismay to the cleric. "I cannot understand it," he told him. "After all, I am such an ordinary fellow."

George's ordinariness, though, was precisely why the crowds cheered so loudly; the very thing that had helped him to secure the love of his people, as well as the future of the British monarchy, in an era when talk of both republicanism and revolution filled the air. His Silver Jubilee was to be the high point of a turbulent career as Britain's monarch – a role that he neither expected to inherit, nor was brought up to play.

George V was born on 3 June 1865, the second son of the prince and princess of Wales – the future King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. With Queen Victoria's reign dragging on until 1901, George's father spent much of his life as a king in waiting. As a wealthy man with too much time on his hands, he became the era's most notorious playboy, even after he married and became a father to his first son Albert (who the family called Eddy), followed by George and his younger siblings.

Although just about everyone knew about Edward's frequent indiscretions, Alexandra did everything she could to protect her sons from the endless gossip. The two elder brothers – born just 18 months apart – were close, and their early childhood was an idyllic one that indulged every syrupy notion of Victorian sentimentality. Eventually, however, the truth about their father's adultery and the pain it caused would become central to both their personalities. It would manifest itself in dramatically different dysfunctional ways.

As the spare not the heir, George's principal role growing up was as constant companion to the future king. As such, his education began aged six when Eddy's did with the arrival of an ambitious young clergyman called Canon John Dalton, who'd been handpicked by Queen Victoria as the princes' personal tutor. Up until this point, discipline had played little part in the young boys' development, but with Dalton, that would change drastically. Dalton, it transpired, was a martinet whose ultra-authoritarian style of teaching would have a profound impact on George's evolving personality.

Dalton was a harsh disciplinarian but a poor educator, training George's brain to prize routine above all else – including imaginative enquiry. George was no idiot, but he would remain for the rest of his life a man of stunted intellect. Eddy, meanwhile, who had been born two months prematurely, was starting to show signs of what today would be recognised as learning difficulties. Back then, in less compassionate times, however, it was simply described as feeble-mindedness.

There was still no expectation of George to one day be king though, and so it was decided that he should instead be groomed for a career in the Royal Navy. In 1877, aged just 12, he was sent to Dartmouth in Devon to train as a naval cadet. Curiously, Eddy was sent, too. By now 13, Eddy's listlessness and increasingly effete character was of great cause for concern in the royal household. Splitting him up from his beloved brother, Dalton insisted, could only have a negative impact on his progress, while a stint of military discipline, it was reasoned, would help to develop the manliness and self-reliance expected of a king. To ensure both boys were also protected against 'moral contamination', Dalton persuaded Victoria to allow him to join them. Two years of naval college followed, after which these curious companions all set off on a round-the-world voyage together on HMS Bacchante. Only when they returned three years later were the brothers finally split up, with Eddy sent to Cambridge University to finish his education. George, meanwhile, stayed on in the Royal Navy.

Navy life suited George. His upbringing under Dalton had left him with a very deep sense of duty and an almost obsessional belief in a routine, and for the next decade he rose through the ranks to command his own ship. It was during this time that he developed his tough-guy image, complete with his trademark beard and gruff manner. Scandal, tragedy and a different call of duty, however, were to ensure that his flourishing navy career was cut short.

While George had been at sea, Eddy had been at play. Having seemingly inherited his father's taste for nocturnal adventures, Eddy's antics were

starting to attract shocking rumours. The most damaging one being that it wasn't just countless women he was bedding, but rent boys, too.

In August 1889, an all-male brothel in Cleveland Street in central London was raided. Although Eddy wasn't there at the time, a close friend of his, Lord Somerset, was, and during the subsequent police investigation, his solicitor threatened to implicate a very important person if the case was pursued. In the event, Somerset fled to France taking the name of this alleged secret VIP with him, but the word on the street was that Eddy was involved, and in November the scandal went public. Another of Eddy's friends, the Earl of Euston, was accused in the press of having visited the brothel. He successfully sued for libel, but during the sensational trial that followed, rumours of a cover up to protect Eddy abounded.

The royal family's PR machine went into overdrive. How best to drown out the noise of the growing gossip? Why, a glittering showpiece wedding, of course. After all, the British public, then just as now, loved nothing more than a right royal knees up. Such a charade would provide the ideal distraction from Eddy's shenanigans while, at the same time, reassuring the nation of his thrustingly heterosexual credentials.

The hunt for a suitable bride began, and the woman Queen Victoria singled out to make a man out of Eddy (at least in the public's eyes) was Princess Mary of Teck. This minor German royal was chosen not because of her bloodline (which was considered inferior), or her wealth (of which she had little) but because of her obedience. The matriarchal monarch knew that Mary was so dutiful she could be trusted to play the part of a phoney wife in a sham marriage without agenda or complaint. The pair were swiftly engaged and wedding plans made. Luckily for Mary, though, Eddy suddenly dropped dead.

Photographed here in 1870, George was never expected to be king

In January 1892, while the royals gathered at Sandringham in advance of the wedding ceremony, the bridegroom-to-be caught influenza, and what was supposed to be a wedding swiftly turned into a funeral. George, who'd come back from sea for the big day, suddenly found himself second in line for the biggest job on the planet.

As direct heir to the throne, it was now George who was expected to marry and start producing children who would guarantee the royal bloodline. But where to find a suitable bride? As luck would have it, there just happened to be a spare one left over from Victoria's previous bout of matchmaking. And so, a year after Eddy's death, George and Mary were betrothed, marrying seven months later.

It had been a lucky escape for Mary (known as May in private) who now found herself married not just to a future king, but to a man who she loved and who loved her back. The pair had grown close in the wake of Eddy's death, discovering that they had much in common. Although she was brighter than George, both were reserved, straight-laced types with a strong sense of duty and the need for order. This marriage, although not without its difficulties, would be no sham, and Mary would provide George not just with his heirs, but also the support he would need to steer Britain's royal family through the most turbulent of waters.

The newly married couple set up home at Sandringham. Not in the large country house there, where just 18 months earlier Eddy had died, but nearby York Cottage, which had been built to accommodate any spill over of guests invited to the estate for hunts and balls.

This comparatively humble house was to become the couple's home for the next 17 years, and was an intriguing choice for the heir to the British Empire to live in. In size and style, it couldn't be described so much as aristocratic, more as upper-middle class. No bigger than many suburban villas, George had it decorated not with antiques and fine art as one might expect of a future monarch, but with furniture and ornaments from Maple's – a store on London's Tottenham Court Road. The result was a home that looked not unlike those of many of his aspirational subjects.

George had been piqued by the scandal that had plagued Eddy and embarrassed by the gossip that circulated about his father. Everything in his upbringing now told him that as king-to-be he should behave in a manner appropriate to his status. His response was to turn domestic

> "George grasped that for a modern monarch to survive, he needed to serve rather than rule"

respectability into a science. The gutter press and gossip-mongers would not have one shred of scandal to feed off of. It was an inspired move.

In 1894, Mary bore him a son named Edward, and another, Albert – called Bertie – a year later. Other children would follow and, with the bloodline established, George set about indoctrinating them in his own brand of rigid discipline. "My father was scared of his father," he once said when quizzed about his parenting skills. "I was scared of my father and I'm damned well going to see that they're scared of me."

Respect, deference and a dedication to duty were all drummed into his children from birth. Although Bertie was to suffer, it was his eldest son Edward, known as David, that George was the hardest on. Haunted by fears that his son could end up as dissolute as Eddy, or even perhaps as philandering as his own father, George singled out the future king for exacting treatment. This was a tactic that was to backfire spectacularly.

Life in York Cottage was dull, with its plodding domesticity brought into sharp relief whenever George's father, who by 1901 had been crowned Edward VII, came to stay at Sandringham. Sweeping into town with a glamorous swagger, the king would hold huge parties at the manor house. Laughter, music and the sound of tinkling cocktail glasses would float down to York Cottage, creeping in under doors and through open windows to disturb the morose clock-ticking silence, where children were seen and not heard and the father of the house was in bed by 11.10pm, every evening without fail. It was an oppressive environment that young David, who marvelled at his grandfather's panache, would grow increasingly resentful of.

Edward VII died on 6 May 1910, bringing an end to his brief stint on the British throne and heralding what would turn out to be a much longer one for his son. George was crowned King George V at Westminster Abbey on 22 June 1911, and then later that year was crowned again, this time as emperor of India. In a ceremony called the Delhi Durbar, which was a bizarre blend of Mogul, Hindu, British, Victorian and Medieval traditions, George became not only the first-ever reigning British monarch to visit India, but the first to be crowned absolute ruler there in front of its people. It was a stunning spectacle – and a calculatingly political move.

By 1911, British rule in India was coming under increasing scrutiny from a new class of highly educated Westernised Indians. George's epic ritual enthronement was designed to drown out their voices and growing calls for independence, while theatrically reasserting the power and the glory of British Imperial rule. And it worked, albeit temporarily.

Back home, though, the old order was beginning to unravel. George's succession to the throne had been seen as a gilt-edged opportunity by progressive politicians to bring about change. In 1909, the Conservative-dominated House of Lords had rejected the Liberal government's radical People's Budget, which planned to tax the wealthy in order to fund an unprecedented programme of welfare reform. The new king now found himself under huge pressure to appoint enough Liberal peers to get the budget

York Cottage on the Sandringham Estate in Norfolk was given to George V as a wedding present passed. Although deeply conservative, George realised that refusal would leave him vulnerable to accusations of being undemocratic. Unlike other European sovereigns of his age, George grasped that for a modern monarch to survive, he needed to serve rather than rule. So he conceded, abandoning the last vestiges of real royal power in the process. Privately, he was furious, but as a pragmatist, he realised he had helped to ensure his dynasty would survive - although its name's days were numbered.

In 1914, World War I broke out. It would eventually take more than 700,000 British lives as George's citizen soldiers wrestled with his cousin Kaiser Wilhelm's troops in the mud and filth of the Western Front. Unsurprisingly, as the death toll spiralled, anti-German sentiment began to run high. At home, Dachshunds were kicked in the street, German shops were attacked, while German-born immigrants were sent to internment camps. When German Gotha aircraft started bombing London in 1917, it was the royal family's turn. Still going by the unfortunate name of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, it became the new focus of anti-German hysteria.

George's answer was simple: he would change the family name. Out went their unwieldy Teutonic moniker, and in came the title Windsor. Quintessentially English, it was borrowed from the name of the family's famous 1,000-year-old royal residence just outside of London. It was a masterstroke, and it remains arguably the greatest rebranding exercise in history.

Changing the family name was the most famous example of how he did this, but he also worked tirelessly to ensure his family were seen to be patriotically supporting the cause.

During the 1,564 days of war, George made more than 450 military inspections, more than 300 hospital visits and personally bestowed 50,000 awards to service personnel. He also instituted no less than seven new types of gallantry award during the war - including the Military Medal and the Distinguished Flying Medal - to reflect both the changing nature of warfare and to specifically honour lower ranks. In addition, a further six service medals were also authorised, including the British War Medal, which bore his likeness and was handed out to 6.5 million recipients.

George's sons would also both see service in the armed forces. His youngest, Bertie, already a Navy officer like his father had been when war broke out, was mentioned in despatches for the courage he showed as a turret officer on HMS Collingwood during the Battle of Jutland, and transferred to the newly established Royal Air Force at the end of the war. David, meanwhile, was sent to France. Although he never saw front-

Before the war George was close to his "dear cousin Nicky", the tsar of Russia, to whom he bore a striking resemblance

The fate of Russia's royal family

How George V sacrificed his cousin to save his kingdom

In 1917, George's decision to change the family name to Windsor not only meant aligning his dynasty closer with the British people, but distancing it from its European roots. While this successfully masked his familial ties with Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II, it was to have tragic consequences for another of his continental cousins.

In March 1917, the Russian Revolution had broken out, and it was soon clear that Tsar Nicholas II and his family were in grave personal danger. Urgent requests were received requesting that the Romanov family be given asylum in Britain. Initially the UK government agreed, but George was concerned that any show of solidarity with the autocratic Russian emperor might inspire the kind of opposition to his own reign that had brought the tsar down, so he intervened. The offer of asylum was withdrawn, and on 17 July 1918 his dear cousin Nicky (as he was known to alway call him) along with his wife and their five children were brutally shot dead by Bolshevik revolutionaries in Yekaterinburg. George, apparently devastated by the news, did what he could to make amends. MI1 - Britain's intelligence agency at the time - was sent to make contact with any surviving Romanovs, and in April 1919, at the height of the civil war that was now sweeping through Russia, George secretly dispatched the battleships HMS Marlborough and HMS Nelson to save what remained of the beleaguered Russian royal family. 17 members of the dynasty were rescued from their bolthole in the Black Sea Port of Yalta in the Crimea. They included the empress dowager - who was both the tsar's mother and George V's aunt - and the tsar's sister Grand Duchess Xenia.

The ships took the Russian royals first to Malta and then on to Britain, where the dowager stayed with her sister Queen Alexandra at Sandringham before returning to her native Denmark.

Duchess Xenia, meanwhile, was granted a grace and favour house on the Windsor Estate by George where she remained until 1937. She was then moved to another royal property in the grounds of Hampton Court Palace, where she lived until her death in 1960.

“George’s extraordinary survival instincts had once again ensured his house would not fall”

line action, David did visit the trenches frequently – something that helped establish his popularity with veterans once the fighting was over.

Returning prisoners of war (of which there were about 190,000) were not forgotten either. On being released from captivity, a letter from the king typically awaited them. Printed on Buckingham Palace-headed notepaper and using lithography to reproduce the king’s handwriting, it was of such a high standard that many doubted it was a mass-produced facsimile. Signed George RI, which stands for Rex Imperator (or king and emperor) it read: “The Queen joins me in welcoming you on your release from the miseries and hardship which you have endured with so much patience and courage. During these many months of trial, the early rescue of our gallant officers and men from the cruelties of their captivity has been uppermost in our thoughts. We’re thankful that this longed-for day has arrived and that back in the old country you will be able once more to enjoy the happiness of a home and to see good days among those who anxiously look for your return.”

The letter, along with George’s other gestures during the war, demonstrate not just the lengths he went to in order to identify with his subjects, but also a social shift of paradigm proportions. To the ruling elite just a generation before, the average Tommy was little more than ‘cannon fodder’. Thanks to George V, his sacrifice would never go unnoticed again.

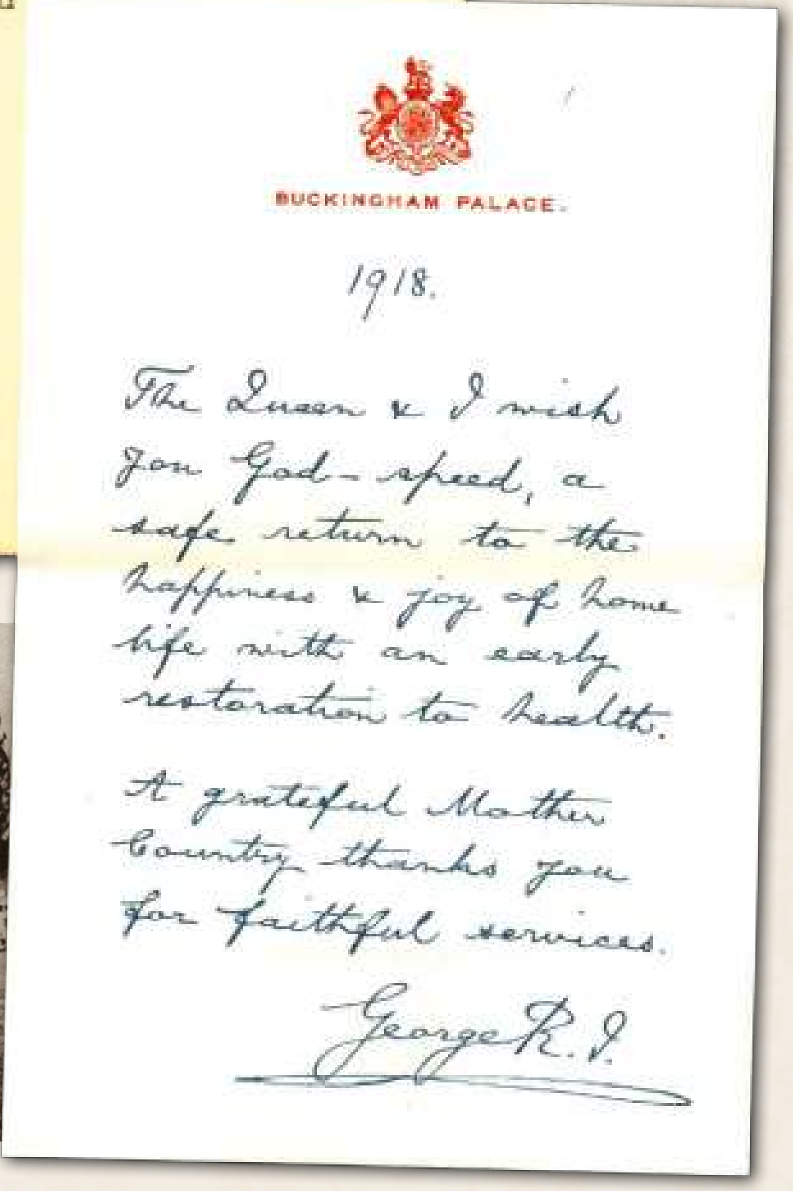
George’s extraordinary survival instincts had once again ensured his house would not fall. His cousin Kaiser Wilhelm II, however, was not so fortunate, ending his days in exile in Holland. His other cousin, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, meanwhile, faired even worse – executed in a cellar by Bolshevik revolutionaries in July 1918.

When the war ended in November 1918, the anti-royal hysteria of a year earlier had evaporated. Huge crowds descended on Buckingham Palace not to storm it but to salute the man they felt symbolised the nation’s victory. George would, for the rest of his reign, be associated with the courage and sacrifice that his subjects hadmade in the conflict. Its aftermath, however, was to usher in a new world that George would find perplexing, to say the very least.

Britain in the 1920s was a time of radical ideas and excess – and George abhorred it. Modernity seemed to offend his every sensibility. As his son David ruefully noted, he “disapproved of Soviet Russia, painted fingernails, women who smoked in public, cocktails, frivolous hats, American jazz and the growing habit of going away at weekends.” Just about everything, in fact, that the young prince embraced. Indeed George’s distrust of the modern world increasingly found a focus in his eldest son’s public conduct, and a rift rapidly began to grow between father and son. Unlike his younger brother Bertie, who by 1926 was married and had fathered the future Queen Elizabeth – or Lilibet as George called her – David was by now drinking, playing and sleeping his way through high society.

A MESSAGE TO YOU
FROM THE KING.

Letters were also sent to soldiers who were discharged from service for injuries obtained during the war



BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

1918.

The Queen & I wish you God-speed, a safe return to the happiness & joy of home life with an early restoration to health.

A grateful Mother Country thanks you for faithful services.

George R.I.

Taken between 1914 and 1916, George V inspects troops that are about to be sent to the Western Front in France

Not that George's objections to his son's lifestyle were merely a product of his strict moral upbringing. As ever there was a pragmatism at play. Seeing himself as the guardian of Brand Windsor's future, George had worked hard to cultivate an image of respectability that his subjects could look up to. By keeping things disciplined and shipshape, he had redefined the role of the royal family not as rulers but as public servants who were worth keeping around. David, he feared, was in danger of blowing all that. The 1920s were a time of decadence for the wealthy, but for the poor they were an era of profound political upheaval. The 1926 General Strike proved that Britain was not immune to revolutionary politics, and a constitutional monarchy, many were now shouting, was an indulgence the country neither needed nor could afford.

> "George had worked hard to cultivate an image of respectability that his subjects could look up to"

Queen Mary and Princess Mary photographed during WWI. Princess Mary took her royal duties very seriously during war and in 1918 she began a nursing course

George V shooting tigers while on a state visit to India in 1911. In the imperial era, hunting wild animals was an acceptable and fashionable pursuit

Extreme hobbyist

How Britain's most ordinary king liked to let off steam

George V was a man for whom keeping up a respectable appearance wasn't so much a way life, as a way of ensuring the very survival of the monarchy. As such, his passions and pastimes needed to appear moderate and not at all controversial. He settled on two diverse ones that, for the time, at least, fitted the bill: stamp collecting and hunting. With both, however, he was displaying a behaviour that could safely be described as extreme.

A pioneer stamp collector, George was made honorary vice president of what became the Royal Philatelic Society of London in 1893, and when he married later that same year, it gifted him an album of nearly 1,500 postage stamps. This would form the basis of one of the biggest collections in the world, with George hunting down rare stamps and spending a fortune on them. In 1905, he bought what's known as a Mauritius 2d blue for a then-staggering £1,450. Not that it wasn't a worthwhile buy – today such a stamp would be worth nearly £3 million.

By the time he died, George's massive collection of stamps was housed in 328 60-page volumes known as his Red Albums. Today the Royal Philatelic Collection is considered to be one of the finest in the world and is thought to be worth about £100 million.

He was no less obsessive when it came to his other great passion – hunting. He and his guests would spend hours shooting the fattened-up pheasants and partridges that were bred on Sandringham estate, and in his 17 years there it's estimated that more than 1 million birds were killed.

In the winter of 1899 alone, by his own scrupulous calculation, he had managed to shoot 12,109 pheasants. In fact, George was so passionate about his past time that the clocks on the estate were all kept half an hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time to maximise the daylight hours he'd have for shooting.

George didn't restrict his hunting to Sandringham either. When he visited India in 1911 for the Delhi Durbar, he took time out from his busy schedule to hunt the local wildlife. By the time he left, he'd bagged 39 tigers, eight rhinos and four bears.

Seated at a microphone in Sandringham, George prepares to give his 1934 Christmas message to the British Empire

> “He had redefined the role of the royal family not as rulers but as public servants”

In response, George launched his biggest PR offensive to date. Cinema newsreels and newspaper front pages were filled with images of the royals mixing and mingling with the working classes – at exhibitions, factories and football matches. Nothing quite like it had ever been seen before, and the ever-charismatic David turned out to be the star of this particular show – not that he had much appetite for it. Bored by the charade, he was becoming increasingly resentful of this public “princing” as he sneeringly called it.

Plagued by serious doubts about his son’s suitability for kingship, George’s health now started to fail him, too. In 1928, he fell chronically ill with bronchitis. Eventually, he recovered but the illness had taken its toll. A life-long smoker, he was 64 years old and growing frail. Increasingly his thoughts turned to what would happen to the House of Windsor after he died and he began looking for a way to further build an emotional bond between his family and every other family in the land. It was the BBC, established just a few years before, that was to provide the answer.

On Christmas Day 1932, George V did what no other monarch in history had ever done before – he spoke to the entire nation in the intimacy of their own homes. Reading out a brief speech, which had been written for him by his friend Rudyard Kipling, into a BBC microphone, he delivered the first royal Christmas broadcast. It was to prove another PR triumph, intimately connecting the royals to the masses on the most celebrated day of the year.

George’s life-long dedication had built an emotional bond between the monarchy and the British people that was more powerful than even he could have imagined. What he glimpsed that sunny day in May as he rode to St Paul’s Cathedral during his Silver Jubilee celebrations must have given him some hope that he had, at least, done everything that he could to ensure the survival of the last great royal dynasty in Europe. As the now 69-year-old told the nation in a broadcast shortly afterwards, “I thank you from the depths of [my] heart for all the loyalty and… love with which this day you have surrounded us, I dedicate myself anew to your service for the years that may still be given to me.”

But King George V’s life no longer had years to run. Within months, his bronchitis had flared up again, and with his time running out, there was little he could do now to shape the future other than appeal to a higher power.

“I pray to God,” he was reported to have confessed to one of his courtiers, “that my eldest son will never marry and have children, and that nothing will come between Bertie, Lilibet and the throne.”

© Alamy; Mary Evans

THE SECRET PRINCE

Prince John, son of George V and Queen Mary, disappeared from history after his early death, but in life he was a treasured member of the House of Windsor

Written by June Woolerton

The paperboy brought unexpected news on Monday 20 January 1919. Headlines that day announced the death of Prince John, youngest son of King George V and Queen Mary, at the age of 13. A smiling boy in a sailor's uniform looked out at readers in a string of photos marking his life, nestled alongside short and formal obituaries. But if people were unprepared for news of his death, more shocks were to come. The papers revealed that young John had died following an epileptic fit and confirmed he had suffered seizures for most of his short life. It was the first time that the royal family had acknowledged his condition.

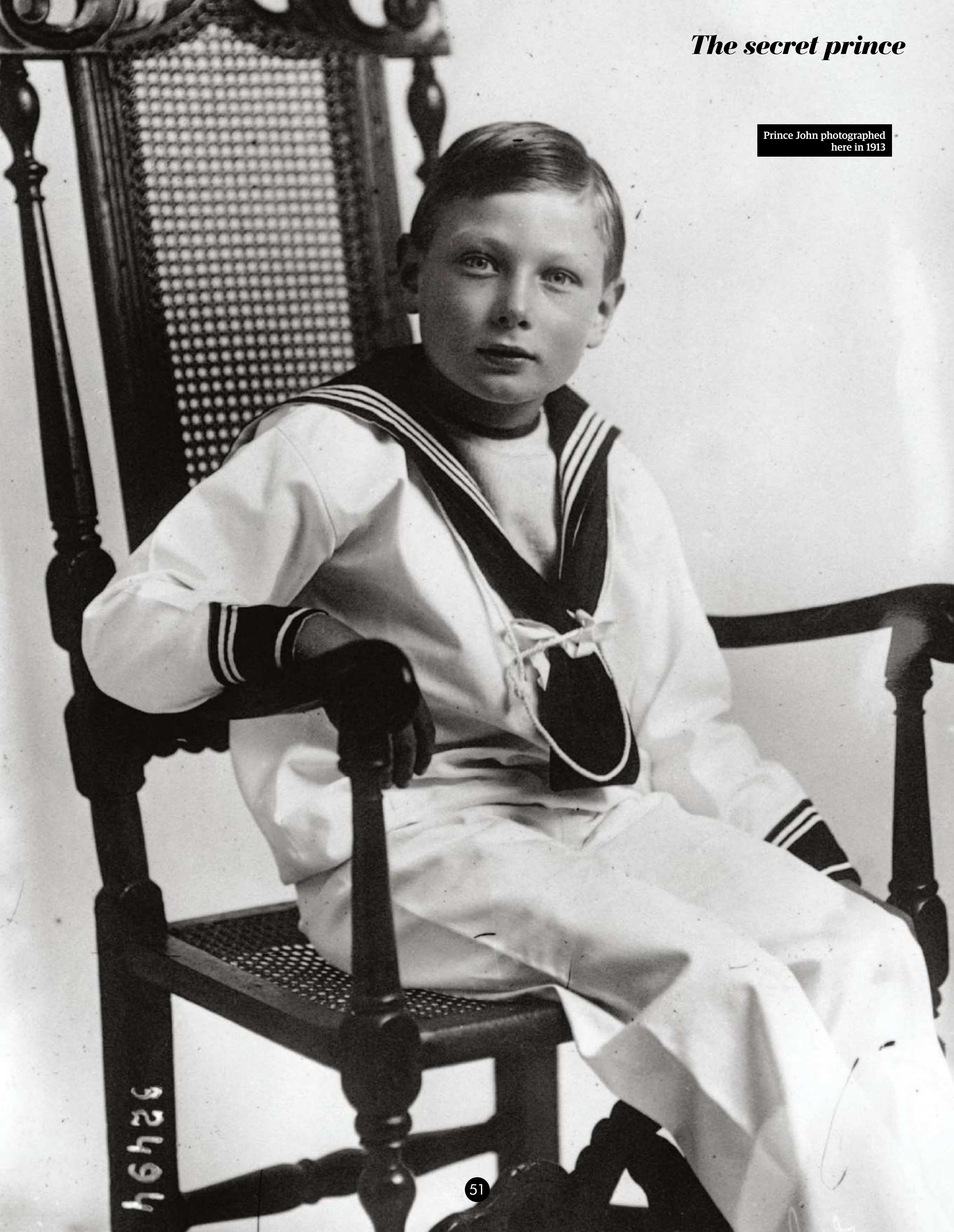
The *Daily Mirror* wrote "sympathy will be felt by everyone for the King and Queen," but in the years that have followed, sympathy for George V and Mary has been in short supply when it comes to John. They have been accused of hiding him away to avoid embarrassment over his epilepsy. John has been described as a 'tragic secret', written out of history and held up as an example of an uncaring attitude in the House of Windsor.

Much of the criticism centres on the decision to send John to live at Wood Farm on the Sandringham Estate with his nanny, Lala Bill, in the last years of his life. The modern telling of John's tale is that his contact with his family lessened as his epileptic seizures became more severe and more frequent. We do know that his public appearances came to an end and that none of his family were with him when he died, on 18 January 1919, at Wood Farm. They found out he had passed away in a telephone call. Critics see this as evidence that George and Mary couldn't cope with either the personal or public fallout from admitting their child had epilepsy and possibly a form of autism too. But one line in Mary's diary soon after John's death reveals a far more human side to the tale that is often told about John. "Miss the dear child very much indeed," she wrote.

John had been a huge part of their lives and their decisions for him in his final years can equally be seen as attempts to give him the best treatment available for epilepsy, a condition for which there was no established medical treatment. Far from being ashamed of John, George and Mary loved him dearly and spent as much time as they could at his side.

It's easy to see why people adored John. He was charming, caring and a rule breaker. Some of the children who played with him at Wood Farm in his last years described him as fun loving, very friendly and concerned for others' feelings. One childhood friend, Elsie Hollingsworth, remembered his fondness for music and how he loved to sit with her, listening to records on her mother's gramophone. Elsie also recalled frequent visits to Wood Farm by George V and Queen Mary. Her father worked on the Sandringham Estate and often told his daughter in the evening that his jobs that day had included driving Prince John up to see his parents and his grandmother, the ageing Queen Alexandra. The modern idea of the abandoned prince longing for family contact sits uneasily with the memories of those who knew the young prince.

There is no doubt that John was born into an unusual family. His parents were an odd couple who became devoted to one another despite a strange start to their marriage. Mary had originally been engaged to George's older brother, Albert Victor, second in line to the throne. When he died, George took his place in the succession and at the altar. He married Mary in 1893 and as duke and duchess of York they soon built a big family. The future Edward VIII was born with much fanfare in 1894 with Albert (later George VI) following in 1895. Their only daughter, Mary, was born in 1897 while two more sons, Henry and George, arrived in 1900 and 1902. Mary provided her husband with so many boys that he once joked he would "soon have a regiment, not a family," and life for the children was very regimented. Both George and Mary were strict parents with high standards that had to be met. George drilled his children like soldiers to instill discipline and is reported to have said that as he was scared of his own father, he would make sure his own children were scared of him. Mary liked to read Shakespeare and poetry to her offspring, even at a very young age, and her main contact with them was when they were brought to her room for an hour every evening by their nannies.



Prince John photographed here in 1913

Their home at York Cottage in Sandringham was run along exacting lines.

John Charles Francis, born on 12 July 1905 at York Cottage, was the last of their children. By the time of his birth, his parents were prince and princess of Wales and John's birth was heralded with the usual formal announcements. Sixth in line to the throne, behind his father and four brothers, John was christened on 3 August 1905 with a very royal line-up of godparents including King Carlos I of Portugal and Prince Carl of Denmark who was about to become king of Norway. His paternal grandparents, Edward VII and Alexandra, delighted in the arrival of another baby to spoil (Queen Alexandra called the Wales children the 'Georgiepets') and the beaming young prince with piercing blue eyes soon joined his siblings on picture postcards of the royals, as much a part of family PR as his sister and four brothers.

John was outwardly a healthy, happy baby with a brush of blonde hair and a full face, but he had been born after a difficult labour and had suffered breathing problems after arrival. He soon rallied and his parents expected him to follow in his siblings' footsteps and adhere to the regimented lifestyle of the royal children at York Cottage. But John seemed to have no intention of sticking to the rules, even from an early age.

> "While his siblings grew nervous when their father drilled them, John smiled through the whole procedure"

While there was no sign yet of his epilepsy, his exuberant and defiant behaviour was raising eyebrows. In later years, it has sometimes been taken as evidence that John had some kind of autism and was unable to fully understand the emotions being conveyed so responded to them in a very different way. In one famous incident, George kissed Mary on his return from a hunting trip and John was heard to say, "She kissed Papa, ugly old man," while as he grew up, the youngest of the Wales children became known for practical jokes like putting glue on door handles. His father's fierce response had no impact on John, who just carried on. While his siblings grew nervous when their father drilled them, John smiled through the whole procedure. The US president, Theodore Roosevelt, described a lunch where John and the other royal children joined the adults at the end of the meal. George called out to his youngest son who responded curtly and carried on with what he was doing. Roosevelt recalled George almost proudly predicting that John would defy him. But even if John's actions were causing concern, the young prince was very far from being hidden away.

John's behaviour could just as easily be put down to his early childhood experiences of his parents. By the time their youngest son was born, George and Mary were expected to take on even

York Cottage on the Sandringham Estate was John's home in his early years

York Cottage © The Giant Puffin at English Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0

more royal responsibilities and when John was just three months old they left for a tour of India, which would keep them away from home for over half a year. Immediately upon their return, they went to Madrid for the ill-fated marriage of George's cousin Victoria Eugenie to King Alfonso XIII of Spain, and soon after that they headed to Oslo to see John's godfather crowned King Haakon VII of Norway.

By the time their son turned one, they had spent just four months in the same country as him. Their rota of royal duties was just as heavy in John's early years. If he defied them more than the others did, it may have been down to a lack of contact necessitated by royal life as much as any condition like possible autism. But before George took the throne in 1910, John's health would cause serious cause for concern.

At the age of four, the young prince suffered his first epileptic fit. At the time, medical understanding of the condition was limited. We know now that epilepsy is linked to neuron activity within the brain, but when John had his first seizure the word neuron was barely known, coming into existence in the 1890s. Although epilepsy had been documented since around 4000 BCE, treatments for it were rudimentary. Bromide had been used to stop seizures for several decades but the first modern treatment, phenobarbital, wouldn't be developed until 1912. Often, people with epilepsy were put in asylums and they experienced much stigma and ridicule. But far from hiding their son away, instead George and Mary ensured that their son was part of their now very public life.

On 6 May 1910, Edward VII died and George V took the throne. A new era for the ruling dynasty had begun with PR-savvy George in charge and just like his brothers and sister, John had an active role to play in the creation of a new royal family. John was taken to watch his grandfather's funeral outside Marlborough House in London. In reality, no one would have batted an eyelid had the youngest of their princes missed the procession, but his parents insisted he take part. At around the time his epilepsy became evident, George and Mary took him to one of the most public events of recent times played out in front of thousands who had come to pay their respects to Edward VII. John was as much a part of the funeral as any of his siblings, but that's perhaps because his parents had a deeper understanding of his condition than many others.

George V, in particular, had experience of epilepsy already. His uncle, Queen Victoria's youngest son Leopold, had had seizures as well

Mary of Teck with her children at Abergeldie Castle, Aberdeenshire

Lala Bill and Prince John became inseparable

"Nanny, I love you"

Lala Bill, the devoted nurse who never forgot Prince John

Charlotte 'Lala' Bill's royal career ended up devoted to Prince John, but it had begun almost a decade before his birth. She came to work for his parents, then duke and duchess of York, as a nurse to their growing family and soon made her mark. Horrified by the cruel way a senior nanny treated the royal children, she broke ranks and complained. The woman was dismissed while Charlotte ended up head nurse. The trust placed in her by the royals was clear. In one of the last photos taken of Queen Victoria with her family, Charlotte hid behind the monarch to prop her arms up so she didn't drop her newest great-grandchild.

Her royal charges nicknamed her Lala and she was strict and loving in equal measure. They spent so much time with her that Lord Esher noted the eldest, the future Edward VIII, was starting to pick up her slight cockney accent. It was Lala who perhaps first realised that while the older children were moving towards independence, John would need more attention, not less, as he grew up and his seizures became worse.

It was inevitable that Lala would go to live with Prince John at Wood Farm when his parents set up his household there. The two spent every day with each other and while it was Queen Mary who selected local children for John to meet, it was Lala who supervised their games and played alongside them. When John died following a massive seizure, Lala was with him. Queen Mary described the nanny as 'heartbroken' at the death.

Lala Bill never married and had no children of her own, but the bond between her and her royal charges never faltered. She kept a huge photo of John as a toddler on her mantelpiece. When she died in 1964 at the age of 89, a note was found in her belongings. It was written in a large, childish scrawl and read "Nanny, I love you. Johnny".

The prince of Wales in 1919, the year that Prince John died

The king who called Prince John "an animal"

The future Edward VIII's harsh words on his brother caused outrage and upset

John enjoyed a close relationship with the brothers closest to him in age, but his bond with his eldest sibling, Edward, was more difficult. Two letters exist that show the future Edward VIII had trouble expressing any warmth for John. One caused outrage when it was discovered years after both royals were dead.

That controversial letter was sent to Edward's mistress, Freda Dudley Ward, just two days after John's death. Edward describes the loss of his brother as "the greatest relief imaginable or what we've all silently prayed for". But during the six-page letter, he adds, "No one would be more cut up if any of the other three brothers were to die than I should be, but this poor boy had become more of an animal than anything else and was only a brother in the flesh and nothing else."

They are harsh words even for someone who might be able to plead the shock of grief. But the brothers' relationship was inevitably limited – Edward was 11 years older than John and they spent little time with one another. In 1907, when John was two, Edward left the family home to go to naval college at Osborne, then Dartmouth. After that, the two brothers would never live in the same house again.

He admitted the lack of closeness to John in another letter to his mother, in which he said, "No one can realise more than you how little poor Johnnie meant to me who hardly knew him". This missive followed an earlier, lost letter in which he had appeared to use more insensitive language to Queen Mary about Prince John. Although its contents aren't known, Edward himself admitted that "I feel such a cold hearted and unsympathetic swine for writing all that I did."

Edward has often been portrayed as a troubled and selfish man. His attitude to John has done little to dispel that.

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as suffering from haemophilia. George had seen that uncle enjoy a full and active life before his death at the age of 31. Leopold's widow had helped raise funds for the Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis in London after his death. George V ended up as resident of the National Society for the Employment of Epileptics, which had been established in 1892 to help people with the condition find jobs. The society was setting up farms around the country, known as colonies, where people with epilepsy could live and work together – this was an idea that was seen as radical and forward thinking. Seeing their son experience seizures was a shock to George and Mary, but perhaps one they were better prepared for than others.

If John's life became more isolated in the early years of his father's reign, that was all but inevitable. His parents had even more royal duties to perform now, heading to India again in 1911 for their coronation as emperor and empress there. His eldest brothers were a decade his senior and had gone to naval college before his first seizures took place. The two siblings closest to him in age, Henry and George, loved to spend time with him, while he had another playmate in his cousin, Crown Prince Olav of Norway, who sometimes came to visit. But eventually Henry and George were sent away to school too, at St Peter's Court in Kent, and soon after that came the first public indication that John's life would be different.

A report in *The Times* refuted previous claims the youngest prince would attend St Peter's Court. No reason was given but by now, John's fits were becoming more regular. It is also suspected that he was struggling to keep up academically. One of the children he later played with at Wood Farm, Winifred Thomas, swapped photos with him, which he signed and that show that even as he approached adolescence, John's handwriting remained large and childlike. His tutor was dismissed when John turned 11 and his education was now in the hands of Lala Bill. She would be his main companion and carer when the decision was made, at the height of World War I, to move John to Wood Farm.

George and Mary's decision to send John to Wood Farm is often seen as the crucial piece of evidence for their coldness towards their son and their determination to hide him away. But at a time when fresh air, peace and relaxation were advocated by leading experts in epilepsy as ideal treatments for those with the condition, these royal parents were able to use their influence and

"George and Mary ensured that their son was part of their public life"

Prince John, in a black-trimmed coat and hat with a feather in it, is photographed on a shopping trip in his early years wealth to give their children just what the doctors had ordered. At Wood Farm, John had a happy and carefree existence with Lala Bill tending to all his needs and every day filled with playing and fun. George and Mary provided John with a happy and comfortable life in his new house. Not only was he surrounded by his favourite toys and possessions, but his mother broke the social rules of the time to find him friends. She met local children and the families of estate workers to select playmates for John.

Queen Alexandra had a special flower garden planted at Sandringham and John regularly visited her to tend their patch together. George and Mary visited him often and he spent Christmas Day 1918 with them before returning to Wood Farm. His condition was clearly of concern, but when Lala Bill phoned them on the afternoon of 18 January 1919 to say he had died after a severe fit, the shock was complete.

Mary recorded in her diary that "our poor little Johnnie had passed away suddenly," and later wrote to a friend that "his malady was becoming worse as he grew older… he has thus been spared much suffering". John's funeral took place soon afterwards at St Mary Magdalene Church with his special place in the family shown at his burial. His parents had named him in honour of George's youngest brother, Alexander John, who had lived for just a day in 1871. Now, they laid him to rest beside the uncle he had never known. Queen Alexandra wrote to Queen Mary that their "two darling Johnnies lie side by side".

Years later, vociferous criticism of George and Mary claimed their shame over John's epilepsy led them to pretend he no longer existed. He wasn't mentioned in the official programme for their Silver Jubilee in 1935 and a later Windsor family tree missed his details out altogether. But the same tree also missed out Alexander John. In fact, the evidence shows that John was an integral part of George and Mary's family and given a lifestyle believed, at the time, to offer good support for people with epilepsy. As parents they may well have been worried about the impact of stigmatisation on their son should his condition become public knowledge, but it's also clear that John's fits, in a time with no real medication to help control them, were debilitating and left him in need of extensive care. His family clearly loved and valued him and wanted to keep him safe and their love for John was shared by many. So many people wanted to come to his funeral that they ended up standing outside the church and John's grave was covered in a carpet of flowers. Far from being hidden, John had been such a large part of royal life at Sandringham that no one could stay away from paying their last respects to a prince they thought of as their own.

The young prince was seen less frequently at royal events as his epilepsy became more debilitating

© Alamy, Getty Images

The Prince of Wales and Lord Louis Mountbatten play with a wheelbarrow in 1921

DESPAIR FOR THE HEIR

The scandalous behaviour of Edward, Prince of Wales led his father, King George V, to fear for the very future of the House of Windsor

Written by June Woolerton

"After I am dead, the boy will ruin himself in twelve months". George V's eerily correct prophecy over the prospects of his heir, Edward, making a success of his reign weren't the only indication the king gave of his increasing anxieties over his eldest son's attitude to his royal role. Just a few years before his death, he told his second son, Albert, Duke of York, that he believed Edward would never even take the throne and would, instead, abdicate his responsibilities. George's despair for his heir was an ongoing issue and one that would have no happy ending.

It had all begun very differently. George delighted in his first-born son but his attitudes to child rearing would have a lasting impact on Edward. From the regimented days where he and his siblings were expected to perform drills and undergo inspections to the barking orders that came from papa, the family home at York Cottage was dominated by George. It left a sense of resentment with Edward, shown years later in diary entries that expressed surprise that King George V was being kind to him. However, he showed deep respect for his father's wishes, agreeing to leave his naval career in the first year of George's reign when the king decided he needed a wider education. And, despite reservations, he took part in an investiture ceremony on receiving his title of Prince of Wales. It clearly had an impact on his father as Queen Mary confided the king had found the whole event rather moving.

The first major crisis of George V's reign also saw his son shine at his father's side. On the outbreak of the Great War, Edward showed himself keen to serve on the frontline, although it was soon ruled it out as too risky. When he was posted to the Headquarters of 1st Army Corps, he sent regular dispatches home and George V relied on him for inside information on some of his generals. The proud father could see what impact Edward's presence as close to the front line as possible had, winning his heir respect from soldiers and veterans alike. Whatever differences they had, at this point the relationship between prince and king was working.

However, his time in Europe during the war would also see Edward embrace another part of his life that would cause almost constant friction with his father. For, in 1916, his equerries arranged a bawdy evening with a prostitute, so the prince could lose his virginity. Soon afterwards, Edward confided to his diary that now he could now think of little else but women. Around this time he had a relationship with Marguerite Alibert, known as Maggie, who would later marry only to end up on trial for the murder of her husband. Rumours, years later, said her acquittal had come about after she attempted to blackmail the royal family over her liaison with Edward. But even putting that aside, as the war came to an end, the love affairs of the Prince of Wales were causing considerable headaches for his father.

George was a moral and disciplined man and acutely aware that his dynasty needed to be seen as beyond reproach. He saw its future success as reliant on a clean living image with family at its heart. However, his son soon showed that his main interests lay not in marriage, but in women who were already married. Privately, this was a cause of distress to the religious king, but it also raised the prospect of Edward being named as an adulterer, which could prove highly damaging to the royal family's image, especially as one day he would be the head of the Church of England.

That didn't deter Edward. In 1917, he developed a fondness for Lady Sybil Cadogan, known as Portia, who was deemed a suitable match. But at the same time, he was enjoying an intense flirtation with Marion Coke, a married woman 12 years his senior who was smart enough to keep a romantic relationship at arms length despite Edward's best endeavours. Portia became engaged to someone else but worse was to come. Just as George breathed a sigh of relief as Edward put Marion aside, he watched with horror as she was replaced by another married woman in a relationship far more serious than any Edward had ever known before.

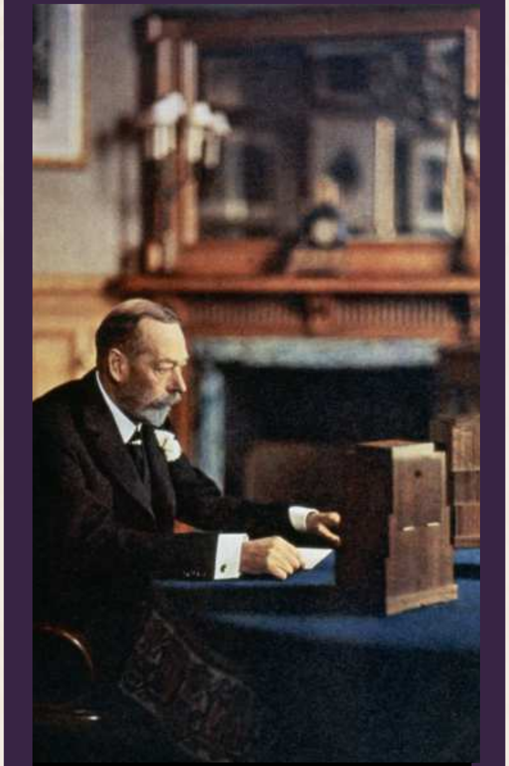
Lady Freda Dudley Ward bumped into the heir to the throne in a doorway just as the war came to an end. Their relationship quickly developed and Edward was so besotted that soon he was writing to her three or four times a day. Unlike Marion Coke, Freda had no intention of keeping the Prince of Wales out of her bed and their relationship quickly became the talk of the better end of town. Edward spoke in private of feeling as though he were already married to her. It became increasingly clear to George that his son had absolutely no intention of finding a Princess of Wales. And as if a serious relationship with a

> "As the war came to an end, the love affairs of the Prince of Wales were causing considerable headaches for his father"

The battle of the clocks

The two different attitudes of king and heir were underlined by their approach to a family tradition

One of the first orders of Edward VIII's reign had all the airs of petty revenge about it. George V, like his father before him, had followed Sandringham time while at his Norfolk home. All the clocks were set half an hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, but just minutes after George had died at Sandringham, his son angrily demanded they be put back. Edward had always hated the custom which had been yet another source of friction with his father. George V was a stickler for both tradition and punctuality and Sandringham Time became very important to him. It had actually been the idea of George's father, King Edward VII, who introduced the system to allow more daylight in the winter for his great passion, shooting. It was later adopted at Balmoral and Windsor as well. Edward's decision to alter the clocks so soon after George's death shocked many in the inner royal circles. Helen Hardinge, wife of George's Assistant Private Secretary, described it as a "jarring descent to the trivial" while Virginia Woolf described it as an immediate act of revenge by an unhappy son. However, Edward's family made no public fuss and even when his brief reign came to an end, no attempt was made to reintroduce Sandringham Time.



George V at Sandringham where the clock was always fast

Pictures of Edward swimming enfuriated King George V who said he "might as well be photographed naked"

married woman wasn't enough to cause concern to the king, Edward began to take on a stream of other lovers whenever Freda went periodically cold on him.

Among the most serious was Thelma Furness who met the prince in 1926 and who shared an intimate holiday with him in Africa in 1930. She spent long weekends with the prince at his Fort Belvedere home even while Freda was still on the scene. Edward's insistence on juggling lovers while also enjoying casual flings and compromising flirtations, particularly when on overseas tours, caused serious headaches for the king and his courtiers who now despaired of the prince ever settling down. George began to remark that he hoped the throne would one day pass to his second son, Albert, Duke of York and ultimately his elder daughter, Elizabeth. Then, in 1931, Thelma introduced Edward to a friend, Wallis Simpson, who was most definitely his lover by 1934 and soon after saw off all her rivals. Not only was she on her second husband at that time but the Prince of Wales seemed more in thrall than ever before.

When Edward brought Wallis into Buckingham Palace, the king could take no more. He told the head of the Prince's Household, Admiral Halsey, that Edward would 'wreck the monarchy and the Empire' before revealing the personal pain the scandals had brought to his home. He told Halsey that he had always tried to lead "a straight and proper course for the good of his people" but that Edward was on the point of letting him down for good. For George, the role of king included an element of personal sacrifice but it was clear from his dramatic love life that Edward had no intention of ever putting his head before his heart.

There were other tensions between father and son that led George to question whether Edward was really serious about the role he had been born

Edward pictured at Sandhurst College startin a football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Fulham in 1921

to. As he entered his mid twenties, reports of the Prince of Wales' enjoyment of London nightclubs were becoming more widespread. His friendship with 'Fruity' Metcalfe also caused concern, as he was seen to encourage the prince in drinking and trips to nightclubs. Edward's behaviour on a tour in Canada in 1927 led his private secretary, Alan Lascelles, to describe the prince as being in "unbridled pursuit of wine and women". His passion for partying at times took over even when he was on duty. On a trip to east Africa he left an official cocktail party early by shinning down a drainpipe before ending up rolling on the floor of the Muthaiga Club with yet another married woman.

Alan Lascelles argued years later that Edward had stopped developing emotionally at some point in his adolescence and certainly his inability to demonstrate empathy with others had given his family cause for concern for years. When his youngest brother, Prince John, died in 1919, Edward had shown little sorrow and one letter written to his mother, Queen Mary, was so harsh that he sent an apology soon afterwards.

But if his personal life caused George V to fear for the future, Edward's approach to politics was just as concerning. George himself had expressed many views behind closed doors but listened to his ministers, offered advice and let the government rule.

Edward, while Prince of Wales, showed every indication he would be more belligerent. The General Strike of 1926 saw George publicly call for negotiation between all sides involved while his heir sent his driver out to hand out Churchill's *British Gazette,* which was firmly set against the strikers.

He took the same approach with foreign issues, making no secret of his admiration for some of the fascist regimes taking hold in Europe. He saw Hitler's Third Reich as a barrier between western Europe and Communist Russia, while arguing that Germany almost needed to fight back against the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which had led to a crippled economy. He showed no sensitivity, either, in who he shared his opinions with, once addressing the British Legion with a speech that supported friendship with Germany. George V was furious but Edward believed he had a right - if not a duty - to share his views and see that they were acted upon wherever possible.

Some other differences between the men seemed to border on the petty. King George was a stickler for correct dress, always smartly turned out according to the strict rules of court. His son preferred to follow fashion and once found himself chided by his father for wearing a jacket that was too pale for the tartan he had on. His insistence on a turned down collar on one occasion led George to exclaim "anything more unsmart I never saw". For George, Edward's inability to see that keeping to tradition in all areas helped to strengthen the monarchy was a serious failing.

George was also constantly angered by his son's desire to try out what he saw as dangerous and risky sports. Edward's passion for point to point racing, encouraged again by Fruity Metcalfe, caused his parents endless worry, as did his

> "When Edward brought Wallis into Buckingham Palace, the king could take no more"

Edward, seen here launching a liner in 1930, appeared increasingly unwilling to take on the regular round of royal engagements, much to his father's anger

> "As scandal followed scandal, Edward seemed more sure that he was untouchable"

enjoyment of flying. George was constantly pleading with Edward to drop his hazardous pastimes, but his stubborn son refused to listen and acquiesce to his father's requests. It was another indication for the king, as if any was needed, that his son could ignore anything that didn't suit his purposes.

But underpinning the friction may well have been a darker realisation. Alan Lascelles revealed that Edward may well have been thinking of giving up his claim to the throne even before his father died. Lascelles wrote that Edward had told several friends that he intended to give up his place in the succession so that he could marry Mrs Simpson. He also confided that George VI had said, after the Abdication, that his brother had mentioned more than once that he had no plans to ever reign as king. George V may well have been aware of his heir's reluctance to take on his role, exacerbating the tensions between them.

The last year of the king's life crystallised the anxieties that scandal had produced between them. Edward's relationship with Mrs Simpson was now dominating the royal family, with the prince holidaying with her in Austria and Italy in the first half of the year. She also had her own rooms at Fort Belvedere. Outwardly, the House of Windsor moved as one with Edward taking part in some of the celebrations for King George and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee that year. The Prince of Wales was also with George for the Trooping the Colour.

Edward didn't attend the marriage of his sister, Mary, but welcomed it as a chance for her to break free of their parents

Edward and his mistress, Thelma, Lady Furness, attend a midnight performance with Edward's brother George and George's fiancée Marina

Edward and Louis Mountbatten in a canvas swimming pool on board HMS Renown, circa 1920

George V was every inch the proud father on the day he invested his heir as Prince of Wales but already the two men were clashing in private

However, behind the scenes Edward's relationship with Wallis was a constant source of angst. The king banned her from court until Edward confronted him and promised that the two weren't lovers. But despite that small rapprochement, George was heard to say that his heir renouncing his rights to the throne might be the best course all round. He had been seen increasingly with the dutiful duke and duchess of York and their simple and family-centred life seemed to chime much more with George's own view of the monarchy. The year ended with Edward at a party with Wallis Simpson while his family celebrated at Sandringham.

In 1928, when the prince was overseas with Lascelles, they were called back because the king was seriously ill. Edward told his assistant then that he was "the wrong person" to be heir to the throne, an indication that even then the role was a burden to him. Other friends would later say that Edward was on the brink of giving up his claim to the throne when George V again became seriously ill in January 1936. However, the old king died without any statement from his heir about abandoning his right to the crown, and with that, Edward's option of not succeeding was lost to him.

Father and son were perhaps very different personalities but neither seemed able to come round to the other's point of view. However, George, with his keen sense of PR and understanding of retaining the mystique of monarchy, could see better than anyone the mistakes that would prove so fatal to his son's attempts to reign. As scandal followed scandal, Edward seemed more sure that he was untouchable, while George feared for the very future of the throne he had worked so hard to secure. And his fears proved right. Ultimately the boy was ruined, and it took him less than a year.

© Getty

Bertie and Elizabeth on their wedding day

BERTIE IN LOVE

Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon would prove a fine example of that old saying, "hard to get", after refusing the hand of the future King of England not just once, but twice

Written by Alicea Francis

Adored by the British public and a leading light in the gloom of World War II, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon was once described by Adolf Hitler as "the most dangerous woman in Europe". For many, it's hard to think of the late Queen Mother – in her feathered hats and floral dresses – as anything other than a harmless grandmama. But there was a side to Elizabeth that few, besides those closest to her, knew about. Beneath the innocent and smiling exterior was a woman of ambition and cunning, determined to secure the hand of none other than the King of England himself. She would eventually be successful – but not in a way she could have imagined.

Elizabeth Angela Marguerite entered the world on 4 August 1900, the ninth of ten children born to Claude Bowes-Lyon, Lord Glamis and his wife Cecilia… or at least, that is the official published story. Edward, the Duke of Windsor – known during his brief time on the throne as Edward VIII – famously referred to the Queen Mother as 'Cookie', alluding to the rumour that Elizabeth was in fact the daughter of Claude and Cecilia's French chef, Marguerite Rodiere. It is certainly true that there has been much confusion surrounding where she was born – even, it seems, from the Queen Mother herself. In 1921, she wrote on her passport application that she had been born in London, but in 1937 she unveiled a plaque that marked her birthplace as St Paul's Walden, Hertfordshire. Then, in July 1980, in the lead-up to her 80th birthday, Clarence House issued a statement reasserting that Her Majesty had been born in London.

It may be that her birth was an early form of surrogacy, which although unusual, was not unheard of. It's possible that Lady Glamis had been advised not to have any more children after she suffered a nervous breakdown, following the death of her eldest child Violet in 1893. The truth behind Elizabeth's birth could never be exposed, however, as it wouldn't be until the 21st century that adoptive children of the aristocracy were given the same right as natural children to inherit their parents' titles. By acknowledging Elizabeth as her legitimate issue, Cecilia ensured her daughter could assume the rank, style and title that all of her legitimate children were due.

Regardless of their genetic link (or lack thereof), Elizabeth and Cecilia were devoted to one another. Lady Glamis was renowned for being a wonderful hostess, and even as a child Elizabeth shared her talent for entertaining, often being encouraged to socialise with the older guests at her parents' parties. Replying to an application for the role of Elizabeth's governess, Cecilia wrote: "[She] is really a delightful companion – very old for her age – and very sensible. So that you will not have a child with you always." One of her tutors, Dorothy Birtwhistle, remembered her as being bright and charming, able to get away with all types of mischief thanks to her angelic exterior: "I was not surprised with the life she ended up having. I could see, even when she was 12, that she would make her mark on the world if given a chance."

It was during World War I that Elizabeth really had her chance to shine. Following the declaration of war, Claude took the decision to move his family to Glamis Castle in Scotland – his family's ancestral seat, best known as being the setting for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. While her four elder brothers departed for the Western Front, Elizabeth, her sister Rose and their mother set about knitting socks and mufflers for the local battalion. It was then decided that the castle would be used as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers returning from the Front. The furniture was removed from the dining room and replaced with rows of beds. While Rose undertook nurse training, Elizabeth, being only 14, was instead given the job of making the injured young men feel at home. She ran errands for them, replenished their stocks of chocolate and cigarettes, wrote their letters home when they could not, read to them and kept them company. Her charm and mischievous streak proved a winning formula among the soldiers. One soldier wrote: "For her years she was very womanly, kind-hearted and sympathetic", and another that the houseguests "worshipped" Elizabeth.

The war continued far longer than was expected, and grief struck the family with news of the death of Fergus, Elizabeth's older brother, at the Battle of Loos in September 1915. But for all of its tragedy, for Elizabeth there were still benefits to be found in the war – namely the many handsome men in uniform. She and her governesses would spend many hours at the window of the family home in London watching the soldiers' to-ing and fro-ing, or chatting to "beautiful sailors" on the night train back to Scotland. One of the few sailors who Elizabeth did not acknowledge as beautiful was Prince Albert – the second son of King George V and Queen Mary. She was present at a party he attended in 1916, and her friend Helen Hardinge would later say that Elizabeth found him "almost repellent".

Within a few weeks of this meeting, the sailor prince would get his first taste of action as a turret officer aboard HMS Collingwood in the Battle of Jutland. Prior to that, he had been posted to the Admiralty with a desk job, having been discharged from naval service following a bout of appendicitis in 1914. When he was finally permitted to return to sea, he spent much of his time on Collingwood confined to the sick bay with acute depression, surfacing only for the battle, and following a diagnosis of duodenal ulcers, the decision was made in February 1918 to keep him on dry land.

That same month, Elizabeth had her coming of age dance. The party was a huge success and well attended, and she was now on her way to becoming one of the most popular girls in society. Within a month, she had a beau – Charles, Lord Settrington, heir to the Goodwood estate and the Dukedom of Richmond and Gordon. If she could manage to secure him, she would also secure one of the greatest titles – and homes – in England. The Hon Stephen Tennant, one of her contemporaries, wrote that she "picked her men with the skill of a chess player, snobbish, poised" and "schooled her intentions like a detective, totting up her chances". Indeed, her eye would soon wander when in March 1918, she was introduced to Edward – the Prince of Wales and heir to the British throne.

"With Charlie dead and the Prince of Wales rejecting her advances, she needed to widen her pool of potentials"

Before the war, the likelihood of a first-in-line marrying someone of Elizabeth's rank was slim to none. For the past two centuries, the German royal houses had provided wives for English princes, but with the two countries at war, that was no longer an option. The Act of Settlement of 1701 also forbade marriages between royal heirs and Roman Catholics, so that ruled out the Belgians and Italians, and of course many of the other European states were now republics. With the pool dramatically reduced, the prime minister advised George V that his sons be allowed to marry the daughters of British aristocrats instead.

News of this spread like wildfire through society, and Elizabeth adjusted her sights accordingly. Like Elizabeth, the 24-year-old Edward was fun-loving and sociable, and he danced with her twice at their first meeting. But Elizabeth's old-fashioned sweetness was not to his taste – he liked his girls sleek and modern. As she turned up the charm, he made sure to keep her at arm's length.

The end of the war eventually came, and Elizabeth continued to be friendly with Charles Settrington. But in 1919, he volunteered for military service Russia, where civil war raged between the Reds and the Whites. In August, Elizabeth received the devastating news that he had been killed. The young woman was inconsolable, writing to her friend Beryl: "He is my only real friend and one feels one can never have another like him". With Charles dead and the Prince of Wales rejecting her advances, she needed to widen her pool of potentials, and she became an infamous flirt. Within a month of Charles's death, she had ensnared one of her brother Mike's friends – James Stuart, the 17th Earl of Moray. In October that year, he was appointed Prince Bertie's equerry, and it was while Elizabeth and James were dancing together at a Royal Air Force Ball in July 1920 that she caught Bertie's eye.

Until relatively recently, Bertie had been in love with another woman. He had met Sheila Chisholm, the Australian wife of the 5th Earl of Rosslyn, through his elder brother, and she was regarded as exciting and exotic. When his father caught wind of the affair with a married woman, he bribed him into ending it by offering him the dukedom of York – and Bertie accepted. Though he was still pining for Sheila, it did not prevent him from asking Elizabeth to dance. The day after, Elizabeth wrote to Beryl saying "he is quite a nice youth"

As a child, Elizabeth was academically bright and charming, but also mischievous

According to the duke of Windsor (second from left), Elizabeth was initially more interested in him than his brother Bertie (second from right)

When Elizabeth entered society at the age of 17, she quickly became one of its most popular debutantes

- despite Bertie being four years her senior - and made no mention of his appearance - as she had done with every other eligible bachelor. Over the following months, Bertie visited her several times, but Elizabeth's affections remained with James. When James made his lack of interest clear, she tried a new tack, spurring on Bertie in an attempt to make James jealous.

Her plan backfired. In February 1921, Bertie informed his parents that he was going to propose to Elizabeth. Upon hearing that she was a nice, old-fashioned girl, they readily agreed. But when he asked for Elizabeth's hand over lunch a few days later, his proposal was rejected. If she couldn't have James, she would settle for no less than the immediate heir to the throne - or at least, that is how the duke of Windsor would later explain it. Others argue that it was her fear of the restrictions of royal life that led her to turn him down. In a letter to Bertie the next day, she said:

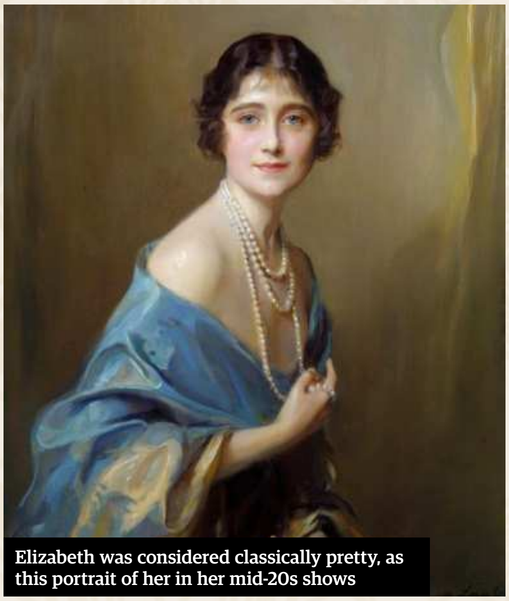
The royal wedding

How the spectacular wedding of Bertie and Elizabeth won over the nation

The date was set for 26 April 1923, at Westminster Abbey. The guests included the Prime Minister, Bonar Law, politician Winston Churchill, and Cecilia's cousin Sir Oswald Mosley - future leader of the British Union of Fascists - while tens of thousands of people lined the route to the abbey, braving the heavy rain showers. Elizabeth was attended by eight bridesmaids, and she wore a dress of ivory chiffon moire designed by Madame Handley-Seymour, dressmaker to Queen Mary. A strip of Brussels lace, inserted in the dress, had been worn by one of her ancestors at a grand ball for Bonnie Prince Charlie, a Stuart claimant to the British throne. Her bouquet, which she famously laid upon the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, was of white roses. Bertie, meanwhile, wore his RAF uniform - he had joined the Air Force upon its creation in April 1918, and qualified as a pilot in July the following year. Despite their turbulent courtship, *The Times* reported that Bertie had "shining eyes and a look of happiness", and he and Elizabeth "seemed to think of no one but each other". After a wedding breakfast at Buckingham Palace, the pair boarded a train from Waterloo to Polesden Lacey, a Georgian mansion in Surrey, where they would spend their honeymoon.

Elizabeth and Bertie were finally wed at Westminster Abbey on 26 April 1923, despite two refused proposals

Elizabeth makes her way to Westminster Abbey on her wedding day



Elizabeth was considered classically pretty, as this portrait of her in her mid-20s shows

Glamis Castle in Angus, Scotland, the ancestral seat of the Earls of Strathmore and Kinghorne where Elizabeth spent much of her childhood

Elizabeth with her father Claude, the Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne, and mother Cecilia

> “The press were soon knocking on Elizabeth’s door, and the future duchess did something unprecedented”

“I must write one line to say how dreadfully sorry I am about yesterday. It makes me miserable to think of it – you have been so very nice about it all – please do forgive me.” Cecilia too, wrote to Bertie, saying “how truly grieved we are that this little romance has come to an end” and that “I do hope the queen is not very much annoyed”.

But the George and Mary were still hopeful that Bertie and Elizabeth would marry, and in September 1921, Mary arranged to meet Elizabeth in person. She became convinced that she was “the one girl who could make Bertie happy”. In an effort to seduce her into the royal way of life, she encouraged her daughter, Princess Mary, to ask Elizabeth to be one of her bridesmaids. Exactly a week after the wedding, Bertie proposed again, but once more was rejected. This time, Elizabeth wrote: “I do hope we can go on being friends, as it would be too sad if a happening like this should come between our friendship, and I don’t see why it should, do you?”

The pair continued to correspond and dance together at balls and functions, and it soon became obvious – to everyone other than poor Bertie – that Elizabeth was stringing him along. By keeping him close, she was keeping her options open, buying herself time to see whether a better offer (from either James or perhaps the Prince of Wales) would come along before she gave in to Bertie’s proposals. Her flirting with him was so overt that other female hopefuls felt unable to make a move of their own. When Queen Mary heard of this, she was furious, and wrote to her friend Mabell asking that Elizabeth’s invitation to the next ball be withdrawn.

This revelation would have been extremely unnerving for Elizabeth and her mother. The queen had the ability to ostracise anyone from society. Realising that the game was over, Elizabeth knew that her only option was to get Bertie to propose to her once more – and this time she had to accept.

Elizabeth and Bertie's daughter, the future Queen Elizabeth II, was born in 1926

But amazingly, when Bertie did propose again – for the third time – on 2 January 1923, Elizabeth did not give an immediate response. "It is so angelic of you to allow me plenty of time to think it over – I really do need it, as it takes so long to ponder these things, and this is so very important for us both. If in the end I come to the conclusion that it will be alright, well and good, but Prince Bertie, if I feel that I can't (and I will not marry you unless I am quite certain, for your own sake) then I shall go away and try not to see you again." By this point, King George and Queen Mary were at their wits' end, with Mary writing to Mabell: "I confess now we hope nothing will come of it as we both feel ruffled at E's behaviour." Mabell would inevitably have delivered this information to Cecelia, who would in turn have told her daughter that it was now or never.

Bertie did everything he could to appease his mother, asking her permission to go to Elizabeth once more and get a "definite answer one way or another". He arrived at St Paul's Walden at 10.30am on Saturday 13 January, and it wasn't until 11.30pm the next day that he finally got the answer he had been waiting over two years for.

When the engagement was announced, the press were soon knocking on Elizabeth's door, and the future duchess did something unprecedented – she invited them in for interview. The royal family were horrified, but it was this move that would do more for their popularity than anything else had in years. She was painted as a "charming picture of English girlhood" – sweet-natured and a real human being, unlike the other, more aloof members of the family. The royal family learned an important lesson that day – that accessibility is what would keep them on the throne. When, on her wedding day on 26 April 1923, Elizabeth laid her bouquet at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – starting a tradition that continues to this day – the loyalty of the public was sealed. Little did she know that 13 years later, her ambitions would finally be realised, and Elizabeth would be crowned Queen of England.

The Duke and Duchess of York, photographed in 1928

©Getty

Y Bwthyn Bach.

THE HAPPY HOME OF 'US FOUR'

The duke and duchess of York loved their life at their cosy London base and it became a refuge as the House of Windsor headed into choppy waters

Written by June Woolerton

Nothing remains of the house where a happy family life became the making of two monarchs. From 1927 to 1936, the future George VI and Queen Elizabeth, then duke and duchess of York, lived with their family at 145 Piccadilly. It was bombed in the war and has since been demolished and built on. But it was in this house that Bertie, as his family called him, and his beloved Elizabeth raised their two daughters – Princess Margaret Rose and the future Queen Elizabeth II. It was here that the bonds were built that led George VI to famously describe his royal family as 'Us Four'. And it was here that both he and his eldest daughter found the support and confidence that helped them become the backbone of the House of Windsor.

This family home was a much longed-for retreat for the duke and duchess of York, but they had to wait until several years after their marriage before finding their dream home. Immediately after their 1923 wedding, the couple had been loaned White Lodge in Richmond Park but they found it too big and too isolated for their needs. Soon after the birth of their first daughter, Princess Elizabeth, in 1926, they planned to move to central London. With the help of a bank loan, they took on 145 Piccadilly and moved in the following year.

The duke and duchess had been keen to live in the heart of the capital again, although neither Bertie nor Elizabeth had any intention of frequenting the daring party sets then beloved of Bertie's brothers, Edward and George. Their new home, close to Hyde Park Corner, gave them views of Wellington Arch and a vista across Green Park to Buckingham Palace. In his later years, the duke's father, King George V, took to waving at Princess Elizabeth every morning, with his granddaughter happily joining in the fun. For although this was a royal residence, it was first and foremost a family home.

That's not to say it wasn't grand. Described as a terraced town house, 145 Piccadilly was far from ordinary. Its stone façade included a pillared entrance topped with a small balcony where the family appeared to greet crowds on more than one occasion. Accommodation spread from a semi-basement kitchen to the suite of rooms at the top of the house that was used by the young princesses. It was there that they had their day nursery, night nursery and a little bathroom as well as a landing where the young Elizabeth, already an equestrian in the making, used to line up her rocking horses every night to change their saddles and harnesses.

The house needed a lot of work when the Yorks took it on in 1927. They also found themselves in want of furniture. Queen Mary let them keep many of the pieces they had used at White Lodge and lent them some chandeliers that had been hanging at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. She also handed over a cheque for home improvements while the young couple hunted out several items at sales. The duchess of York also had to find new curtains when she discovered those she had used at White Lodge were too small for the windows of her new home.

However, as they prepared to move house, the duke and duchess of York were also getting ready to embark on a tour of Australia and New Zealand, and so many of the changes to their new house happened while they were away. When they returned six months later, George V was the first to point out the hard work that Queen Mary had put into 145 Piccadilly.

Inside, it had all the airs of the old world that was now fading into history. Heavy furniture filled the rooms – even the baby's nursery held an old-fashioned glass-fronted display case where some of Elizabeth's many toys were put on show. But for Bertie and Elizabeth it was the home they had craved and their little girl was at its heart. Their tour had been a huge success, but the couple had missed their baby daughter greatly. Now, even though they were fast becoming the hardest-working members of the royal family, Elizabeth once again became their main focus. Her mother excitedly described her as "quite delicious" on more than one occasion while her father could barely contain his pride in her.

Bertie and Lillibet play with their pets in the gardens of 145 Piccadilly in July 1936, just months before they had to leave their idyllic family home

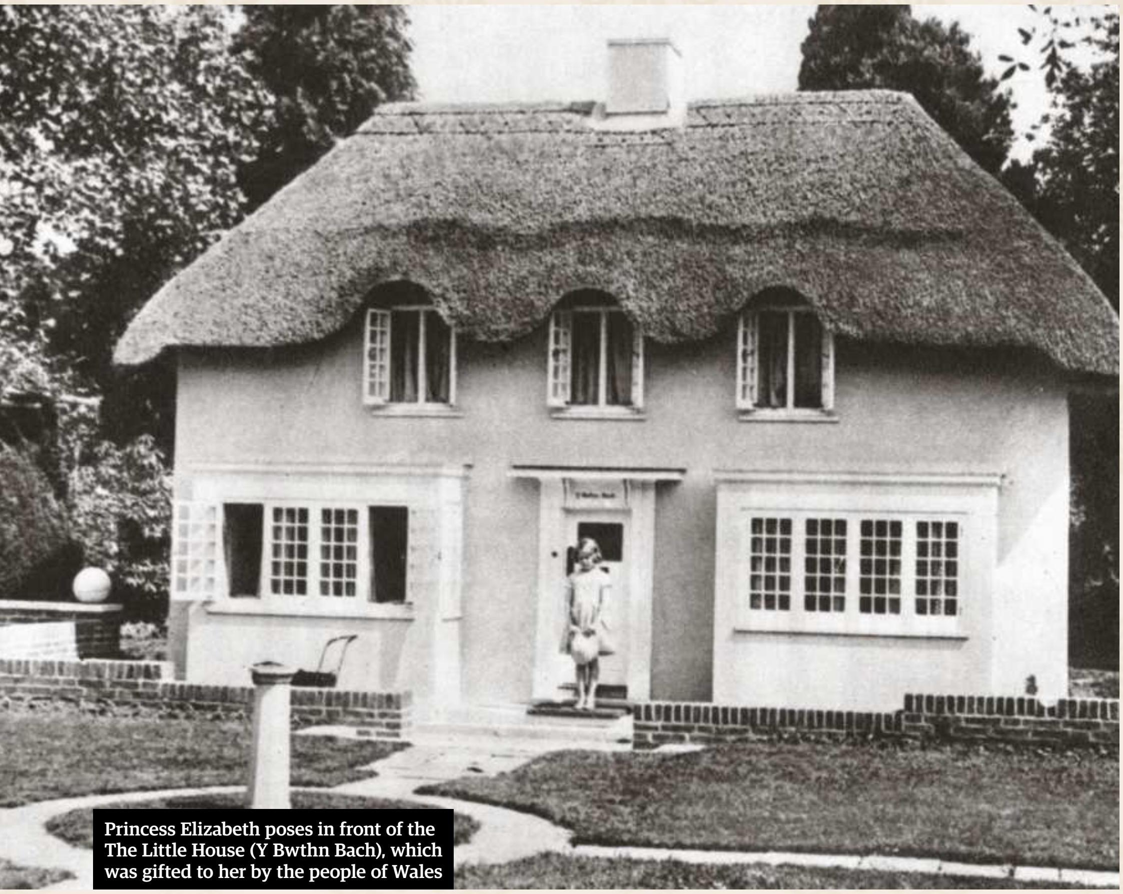
However, like all royal couples of the time, Bertie and Elizabeth had help with their children. They had employed a nanny, Mrs Knight, soon after the birth of their first daughter and she had a big role in young Elizabeth's life. She took charge of feeding and dressing the princess as well her daily routine, dictating everything from playtime to bath time. She found herself with quite a chatterbox on her hands as the little princess soon showed how keen she was to talk. It was within the walls of 145 Piccadilly that she started to say her own name but, unable to pronounce it, came up with 'Lillibet' instead – a name still used by her closest family. And if there was a quiet moment, it was filled by Jimmie, the parrot that Bertie had adopted during the tour of Australia, who liked to ask people if they wanted a drink.

The Yorks soon developed a routine that saw them spend the first part of the year at their London home before heading to Scotland for the summer. It was there, at Glamis Castle on 21 August 1930, that the couple welcomed their second daughter. Princess Margaret Rose first came to 145 Piccadilly that autumn with Mrs Knight taking care of her while her under nurse, Margaret MacDonald, was given greater charge of Princess Elizabeth. The two had already formed a deep bond, with the little princess calling her 'Bobo'. The link that started at 145 Piccadilly would last for decades to come.

During her tour of New Zealand, the duchess of York had noted how children there "come first in everything" and as her young family grew, it was a policy she herself adopted. Although the girls had their rooms at the top of the house, they were allowed to go pretty much where they pleased. In the morning, they ran down to their parents to breakfast together while lunch was also shared with mama and papa if both were at home. At bath time, their parents trekked up the stairs to their daughters to play while pillow fights were a regular family pastime.

> "Bertie and Elizabeth were determined that fun should be as big a part of the young princesses' lives"

The royal family with their dogs in the grounds of the Royal Lodge, Windsor in June 1936, just months before Bertie became king



Princess Elizabeth poses in front of the The Little House (Y Bwthn Bach), which was gifted to her by the people of Wales

The duchess of York had also had a transformative effect on her husband's family, which had previously been inclined to bouts of stuffiness. However, Elizabeth managed to befriend them all and so 145 Piccadilly became a hub for uncles, cousins and grandparents who wanted to spend time with the young princesses. King George V and Queen Mary were utterly smitten with both of their granddaughters while Elizabeth's parents, the earl and countess of Strathmore, were also regular visitors. They, like others who paid a call, might find teddy bears or dolls raining down on their heads as they arrived in the entrance hall. As the princesses grew up, they took to hurling soft toys down the stairwell from their top floor nursery as soon as anyone entered the grand hallway.

The family were great dog-lovers, and the family kept labradors as well as corgis

But young Lillibet was fast approaching the age when schooling had to play a part in her carefree existence and at Easter 1933, Marion Crawford joined the household as governess to the young princess. Crawfie, as she came to be known by her charges, had previously worked for the duchess of York's family and had impressed both Elizabeth and Bertie with her straightforward manner and love of the outdoors. She made them wait two weeks before agreeing to a trial and after that month-long test, she began a life with them that would last for over 15 years.

Crawfie had wanted to be a child psychologist and soon had Princess Elizabeth reading newspapers. She devised a timetable that covered six days with morning lessons starting at 9.15am and ending at 12.30pm for lunch. However, she found the duchess of York to be rather relaxed about the formal education of her daughters. The duchess had taught young Lillibet to read and spent time telling Bible stories to both her children when they came into her bedroom in the morning, but Crawfie would end up feeling both girls could have learned more. Queen Mary agreed with her. She wanted more religion and history included in her granddaughters' lessons but Bertie and Elizabeth were determined that fun should be as big a part of the young princesses' lives.

Even as the girls grew up, lessons at 145 Piccadilly – always taken in the boudoir belonging to their mother – were kept to mornings, however hard Marion Crawford tried to alter the routine. Afternoons were dedicated to dancing, singing and fresh air. It was easy for Crawfie to get the girls out and about – their London home had a large, communal garden at the back where they could walk, run and play. It also gave the young princesses a rare chance to meet other children their own age.

Crawfie would later anger her employers by writing about her experiences with the family, but it is from her that we get a clear picture of the relationship not only between parents and children but between the duke and duchess of York themselves during their time at 145 Piccadilly.

Playdates with a princess

Princess Elizabeth's early friends were mostly royal relations but her home at 145 Piccadilly allowed her to extend her social circle

Some of the earliest images of the Queen as she grew up were taken in the gardens at 145 Piccadilly. In these photographs, the then Princess Elizabeth is seen playing happily, cuddling her pet corgis and running carefree in this safe and secluded part of central London. But the garden, shared with several other properties in the row, was also where she could enjoy playdates and where she would make friendships that would last for years.

In 1930, Lillibet asked a little girl in the gardens if she would play with her. Sonia Graham-Hodgson later recalled that they spent an afternoon playing 'French cricket' before heading inside with the future monarch shouting, "See you tomorrow!" It was the beginning of a friendship that saw the two girls spend nearly every day together when they were both in London.

Sonia, who was eight months older than the princess, remembered sharing games like hopscotch with her royal friend who she described as thoughtful and well behaved. Their lives changed when Princess Elizabeth moved to Buckingham Palace after her father became king in 1936 with their playdates becoming less frequent. They would always stay in touch, however, until Sonia's death in 2012.

Princess Elizabeth with her friend, Sonia. They sometimes left the grounds of 145 Piccadilly to play in Hyde Park

Crawfie smiles with Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret in a miniature car

The ordinary London townhouse became a focal point for photographers desperate to catch a glimpse of the popular royal couple and their baby daughter

Marion Crawford described the pair as “most happy in their own married life”. While the romances of the Prince of Wales were thrilling gossip columnists, the Yorks had a public image as hard working, steady and quiet. But Crawfie said that they were “very much in love” and the couple liked to take evening meals by themselves in the dining room of their London home, time just for them in a house dominated by the daughters they so clearly adored.

The family also had use of other homes. As well as spending time at the royal retreats of Balmoral and Sandringham, they had a second home at Royal Lodge in Windsor Great Park, which George V allowed them to use from 1931 onwards. But it was to 145 Piccadilly that they always returned. It was here that they developed the habit of playing card games together, often settling down for rounds of Rummy, Snap or the rather appropriate Happy Families.

The London home of the duke and duchess of York had always been an office as well as a home but as the 1930s got under way, it became more central to their royal work. The couple were taking on more responsibilities as George V’s health faltered and Edward, Prince of Wales, continued to split his time between regal duties and the fast life that was beginning to cause his family grave concerns. Their London home became well known as the setting for important dinner parties, which attracted guests from all walks of life. JM Barrie and Rudyard Kipling both dined there, as did leading politicians Ramsay MacDonald and Stanley Baldwin. The couple were also taking on more patronages and an extensive diary of public engagements and tours. Much of the behind-the-scenes work for those events went on at their London residence, all while Lillibet and Margot ran through its corridors chasing their pet dogs.

But differences between the sisters were already starting to appear. Elizabeth was beginning to show signs of a sense of duty while Margaret's high spirits were increasingly clear. Marion Crawford said later that what her employers had really wanted for their daughters was "a happy childhood, with lots of pleasant memories stored up against the days that might come out". In 1936, those dark days finally arrived.

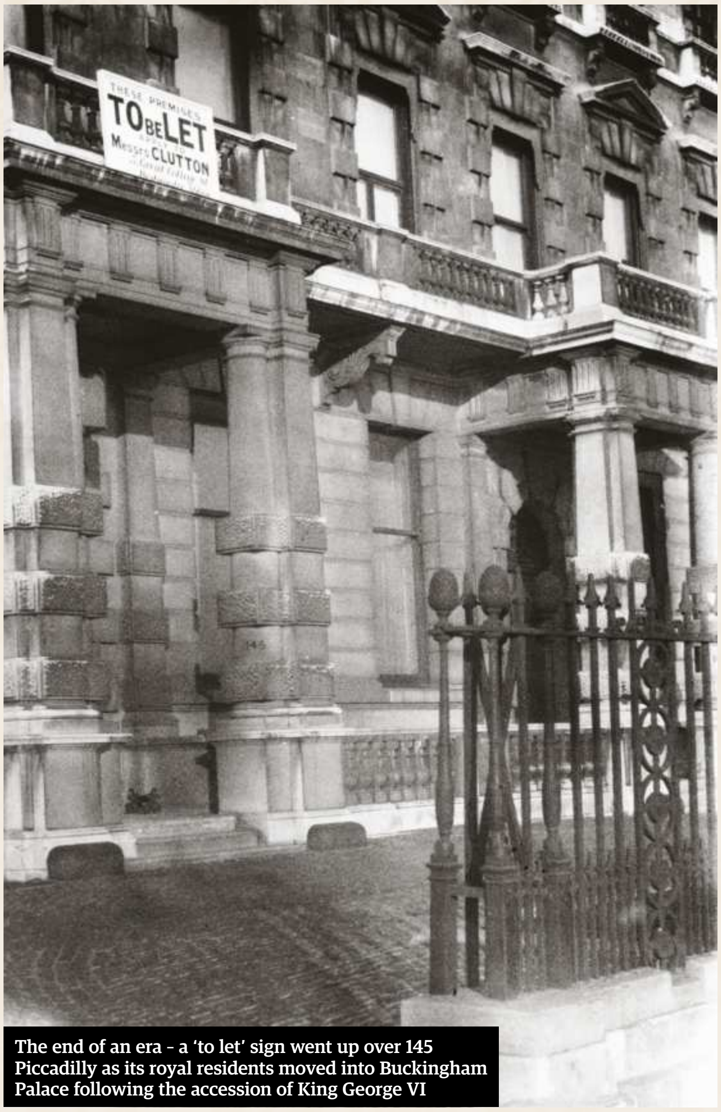
The happy home was plunged into mourning on 20 January that year when King George V died at the age of 71. The duke of York – now heir to the throne – and his wife found themselves taking on even more high-profile engagements. However, on the continent, the new king, Edward VIII, was entertaining his American lover, Wallis Simpson, and by the time the Yorks returned to their London home after their summer holidays, it became increasingly clear that a crisis was developing. It was within the walls of the townhouse they had come to love that Bertie and Elizabeth first contemplated the prospect of the abdication. When Edward finally did give up his throne on 11 December 1936, their happy home had to be abandoned.

The new king and queen moved with their daughters to Buckingham Palace, and 145 Piccadilly was packed up. Soon after its royal residents left, the building was no more. War came quickly and in the early months, the former regal home was used as an office for a relief fund. But on 7 October 1940, during the Blitz, a highly explosive bomb fell on it, causing extensive damage. An air warden's report noted that a caretaker and his family had been found among the wreckage. In the late 1960s, plans were drawn up for a luxury hotel on the site with the new building opening in 1975.

But while the house itself is gone, its memories live on. It had been a happy base for a young couple and their daughters, and the joy they found in one another would end up being seen on a world stage as Bertie and Elizabeth took the throne and the 'Us Four' that had begun with its happy life at 145 Piccadilly became the foundation of a new royal family.

> "Elizabeth was beginning to show signs of a sense of duty while Margaret's high spirits were increasingly clear"

Princess Elizabeth spent hours playing in the gardens of 145 Piccadilly with her pet dogs



The end of an era – a 'to let' sign went up over 145 Piccadilly as its royal residents moved into Buckingham Palace following the accession of King George VI

© Getty

WINDSOR RESTAURANT

Dignitaries from around the world attended the funeral of King George V on 28 January 1936

THE UNQUIET PASSING OF A KING

George V's death was seen as the gentle end of an era but his last day held a dramatic secret only revealed half a century later

Written by June Woolerton

On the evening of 20 January 1936, a short statement revealed George V's life was "moving peacefully towards its close". Those simple words painted a picture of serenity but while the actual passing of the king that night was gentle, the circumstances surrounding it were not. Chaos broke out almost as soon as George V took his final breath. Then, 50 years later, it was revealed his doctor had hastened his death, with no indication that anyone had been aware.

George V's final illness, which began with the New Year, had taken on a grim inevitability even before Bertrand Dawson made his decision to inject his monarch with fatal doses of morphine and cocaine. The king had been ailing badly for weeks and all those attending him that night at his home at Sandringham were aware that death was only days - if not hours - away.

In his diary, published years after his own death, Dawson described the final evening of George V's life. He said it was clear that his patient's "last stage might endure for hours", adding that "waiting just for the mechanical end when all that is really life has departed only exhausts the onlookers". The entry also contains Dawson's admission that he had "decided to determine the end". Dawson gave the unconscious monarch two injections in his jugular vein late that night and George V died at 11.55pm, just as his doctor had planned.

For as well as saving his king from suffering, the royal physician knew that if George lingered

News Chronicle
THE KING IS DEAD:
SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

The king's doctors hastened his death by several hours so it could first be announced in what they called "the right papers"

on into the early hours of the morning, news of his death would appear first in the afternoon tabloids. However, if he died before midnight, the end of his reign would be announced by *The Times,* which went on sale first thing in the morning. He told his wife to call the paper's editor to tell him to hold his first edition. George's death was communicated just in time for the world to hear it from the early broadsheets with poetic reports of his final words, including the elegiac "How is the Empire?"

The official line was that the king had died of bronchitis. He had been in poor health for some time and had already experienced lung problems after a lifetime as a heavy smoker. The previous year he had celebrated his Silver Jubilee, but an arduous itinerary of celebrations had left him exhausted and he increasingly needed oxygen during the night. The death of his beloved sister Princess Victoria on 3 December 1935 had left him devastated. Soon after Christmas, his breathlessness became worse and on 15 January 1936, he went to bed early after complaining of feeling unwell. Little did he know that he would never leave the room again.

His family had gathered round him for his final illness but began to fragment almost as soon as George died. His eldest son, Edward, was understandably extremely anxious as his father's life ebbed away. As soon as the old king died, he became hysterical, sobbing frantically and clinging to his mother before angrily ordering all the clocks, which were half an hour fast, be put to the right time. Queen Mary, meanwhile, did homage to her son as her new monarch but then immediately began to press for George's funeral to take place as soon as possible.

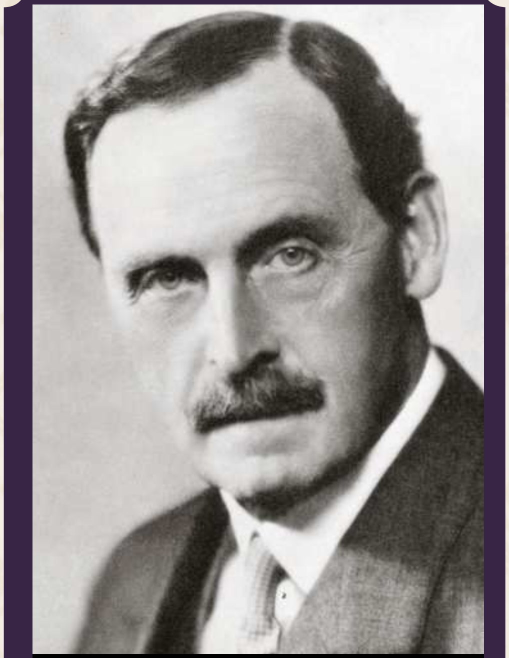
On the afternoon of 21 January, the old king's coffin arrived at the church at Sandringham, Norfolk, where it rested before being taken to London to lay in state. But by the time it arrived, events had taken another ominous turn. The official accession of King Edward VIII was declared at St James's Palace on 22 January 1936. By tradition, the new monarch never attends the event but as the ceremony got under way, Edward was spotted at a window, smiling. He had just one companion – Wallis Simpson.

Mrs Simpson disappeared from view as Edward joined his family for the final acts of George's reign. The new king stood vigil at his father's coffin alongside his three remaining brothers – the dukes of York, Gloucester and Kent – just hours before it was carried through huge crowds to Windsor where the funeral was held. George V was buried in St George's Chapel on 28 January 1936.

Dawson's revelation came to light in 1986 with the publication of his diary and it made scandalous headlines around the world. It was condemned by many and described as "evil" and even "murder" by some experts. There is no evidence that George V, his family or his other doctors were aware of what happened, and historians agree that Queen Mary's deep religious faith made it unlikely that she would have sanctioned such an act. It appears to have been a decision that was made by Dawson alone.

George V had been a master of PR but while his death occurred with all the punctuality he valued so highly, it was, in fact, a drama hidden from even those who loved him best for decades.

George V's coffin lay in state at Westminster Hall before his funeral at Windsor to allow as many people as possible to pay their respects



Bertrand Dawson admitted in his diary that he had hastened the death of King George V

The 20th-century regicide

Bertrand Dawson became a celebrity when he saved George V's life in 1928 but he was also responsible for his passing years later

Bertrand Dawson was a royal favourite of long standing when a falling out with a colleague led to the creation of what seemed, at the time, a rather petty rhyme. It went 'Lord Dawson of Penn has killed lots of men, so that's why we sing, God Save the King'. Years later, it would take on a new meaning.

Dawson, born in Croydon in 1864, had been made a baron in 1920, by which time he had been serving the royal family for over a decade. First appointed by Edward VII in 1907, he was promoted by George V soon after the start of his reign in 1910. In 1928, he saved the king's life when he developed an abscess that led to blood poisoning in an age where antibiotics were unheard of. Dawson found it in the nick of time. Once recovered, George V was so grateful that he made his doctor a member of the privy council.

Dawson remained in royal service after George's death. Edward VIII made him a viscount in October 1936 and around the same time, the royal doctor spoke in the House of Lords against the legalisation of euthanasia, which he said was a choice for "the wisdom of the medical profession". Praise came from, among others, the archbishop of Canterbury, who had prayed at George V's bedside as he lay dying. Little did he know what the royal favourite had done.

© Getty

PUBLIC LOVE, PRIVATE ANGST

Edward VIII was a popular monarch but from the moment of his accession, doubts existed behind palace doors over how long his reign might last

Written by June Woolerton

Soon after the accession of Edward VIII in January 1936, Clive Wigram, private secretary to the sovereign, wrote to the governor general of Australia, outlining the new monarch's abilities. He concluded that "No King could have had a better start that King Edward". The large crowds that turned out to cheer the young ruler, the warm reception given to his charisma filled speeches and the reticence of the press to tarnish his reputation by reporting his relationship with Wallis Simpson all underlined just how popular Edward was at the start of his reign. But behind the scenes, politicians and dignitaries were already expressing their unease at his attitude while the possibility of abdication was being talked about months before his rule reached crisis point. Edward was the king with two faces, loved by the public but always seen as a liability by those with power and influence.

He had come to the throne at the height of his popularity. While heir to the throne, Edward had been described as "the idol of bachelors, the dream of spinsters" thanks to his good looks, sharp fashion sense and ability to charm almost at will. His vociferous arguments for better jobs for former service personnel and improved housing as well as extensive visits to poorer areas and a wide range of overseas tours had cemented his place as a people's prince. But it was his insistence that he could carry on in the same vein now he was king that first alarmed politicians.

While he appeared to get off to a good start, tackling the red boxes that now came to him as monarch with energy and vigour and winning plaudits for his moving speech to the Accession Council in the aftermath of his father's death, his determination to do things his own way rang immediate alarm bells with some. No monarch had ever witnessed their own proclamation before but Edward stood at a window while the ancient ceremony was carried out at St James' Palace on 22 January 1936 having ignored safety concerns and flown to London from Sandringham following his father's death.

He refused to follow the protocol of using black trimmed writing paper as official mourning continued, sending his first missives as monarch on the blue stationery he had always used at his home at Fort Belvedere in Surrey. He showed reluctance to move into Buckingham Palace but grudgingly assented to the change. However, it was one of the few concessions he made. As he began to put his own mark on his reign, the new king asked for a plan to be drawn up to end the process of awarding Royal Warrants and took to walking short distances rather than travelling by car, leaving some parts of the establishment concerned that he was lessening the mystique of the monarchy. On the surface, some of their objections seemed petty especially when set against the backdrop of Edward's huge popularity but his determination to modernise the royal family and apparent willingness to abandon any tradition that didn't please him immediately led to serious concerns within weeks of his accession.

The leading politicians of the day, including Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, had their own worries about the long term relationship between monarch and government. It had already been noted that while Edward was happy to cultivate the opinions of younger politicians, he had less time for older ministers and soon he was keeping them waiting for meetings and audiences. In the early part of his reign, he had a tense meeting with Cosmo Gordon Lang, the archbishop of Canterbury, who later expressed concerns that Edward knew little about the Church of England of which he was now supreme head.

But while Edward could leave politicians cold with his apparent lack of respect for their wishes, in public his charm continued to win support. He continued to make visits to impoverished areas, talking at length about the need to create jobs and improve living conditions. And yet at the same time, he was initiating a series of cuts and budget trims at his royal residences which led to job losses and reduced salaries for many old retainers.

But the public and private Edwards were always kept well apart. At one dinner party he talked about his wish to make the monarchy more in tune with the era it now had to survive in but while this modern approach won him support, in private, he could be almost medieval in his manner of bringing about change. Edward showed, early on, an unwillingness to listen to anyone who disagreed with him. He insisted that Cabinet papers had to come to him first, but his early passion for reading them soon disappeared and many red boxes lay on his desks for days before he even got round to opening them. However, it was his attitude to the rapidly changing situation in Europe that really raised concerns behind palace doors.

In an era still bruised by the destruction of World War I, Edward spoke for many when he gave a public address advocating the need for peace at all costs. He lived in an era where trying to live alongside the dictatorships that had taken root in Germany and Italy, of appeasing them to avoid conflict, underpinned the thinking of many influential people. But it was his determination to act on his beliefs, even when they went against government advice, that caused consternation.

Handsome and charming, King Edward VIII seemed able to mix the modern and the traditional as his reign got under way

When the exiled Emperor of Abyssinia, Haile Selassie, arrived in London, Edward resisted political pressure to receive him at Buckingham Palace in case it offended Mussolini, whose Italian troops had ended his rule. On his accession, the German ambassador reported that the new king was "warm" towards the country and that support for a nation now ruled by Adolf Hitler was what really made politicians wary of Edward VIII.

When Hitler marched his troops into the Rhineland in March 1936, Edward was very firmly against Britain and its allies countering with armed action of their own, with several German sources claiming he had summoned politicians to his office to insist any response they made was peaceful. In reality, the final decision was never his to make but the new king believed he should be listened to in all areas of politics. Edward saw Hitler as a useful ballast against Communist Russia, which he despised wholeheartedly and which he held personally responsible for the brutal deaths of several of his relations, including Tsar Nicholas II and his family. Like many of his class, he showed sympathies for the fascist regimes in Europe with Joachim von Ribbentrop, who became German Ambassador to Britain in 1936, even describing Edward as "a kind of English National Socialist" – but then Ribbentrop had a vested interest, for he had been sent by Hitler to cultivate the new king.

How close Ribbentrop got to Edward remains a subject of debate but the German diplomat definitely had strong links with Wallis Simpson. Ribbentrop wanted to exert control over Wallis and ultimately Edward as a ploy to influence British foreign policy. He was perhaps surprised by how little say the king could really have in the government's affairs, despite Edward's own beliefs on how much sway his word held, but his foray into the circles surrounding the king increased the anxieties that already existed and led to police trails being placed permanently on Mrs Simpson and her lover.

Among the major concerns was Edward's carefree attitude towards his official papers. The king now showed little interest in them, leaving them lying on desks where they were stained with drinks. But that meant anyone might be able to see them. At a reception, Ribbentrop began telling the president of the Board of Trade about matters discussed by cabinet just a few hours earlier, information that Stanley Baldwin had passed to Edward who had told Wallis who had then shared it with her new friend. If Edward had paid more attention to the boxes as his reign was progressing, he would have noticed that they contained little sensitive information but as preparations began in earnest for his coronation, his mind was elsewhere.

Edward VIII's only State Opening of Parliament took place on 3 November 1936

"The new king believed he should be listened to in all areas of politics"

As the crisis over his relationship with Wallis Simpson picked up pace, Edward went on a tour of Wales. It would his last major set of public engagements

When Edward left England for his first summer holidays as king, he was still as popular with the public as ever before. But they knew nothing of the vagaries that were raising serious questions over whether his reign could continue. While the British press reported the king was enjoying a sunshine break, their European counterparts were running stories of Edward and Mrs Simpson cruising the Mediterranean. Very soon the crisis had become so real that no newspapers could keep the pair off their front pages.

When it came to his relationship with Mrs Simpson, Edward adopted the same stance he had taken throughout his entire reign. He would do things his way even if his advisers and politicians opposed him -and they did. In August 1936, the marriage of Ernest and Wallis Simpson came to an end at Ipswich Assizes with a decree nisi. Baldwin visited Edward in October, asking him to try to prevent the divorce becoming absolute but he refused. That was enough to send the king's private secretary, Alec Hardinge, running to Edward's younger brother, Albert, to warn him that an abdication was in the offing.

In public, however, all remained calm. On 3 November 1936, Edward travelled to the Palace

The fallen king – Edward tries to hide his face as he leaves Windsor Castle having just renounced his throne

Edward's cypher is fixed to a boat at the start of the swan upping season in July 1936, when most of his subjects remained unaware of the tensions forming behind the scenes

of Westminster for what would be the only State Opening of Parliament of his reign. Thousands packed the streets of central London for a chance to see their king, but heavy rain forced Edward to go by car – an innovation that may well have pleased a monarch who had made modernisation his aim. He stood before the assembled Lords and Commons and announced plans for his coronation to take place in May 1937 followed by a visit to India, where he would be crowned as Emperor. It was what the people wanted to hear, but even this moment of triumph hid a bitter behind-the-scenes battle between king and courtiers after Edward complained bitterly about the prospect of a trip to India.

It would turn out to be a pointless argument. On 16 November, the king summoned Baldwin to Buckingham Palace to tell him of his plans to marry Wallis Simpson. As usual, he expected to get his own way, and when Baldwin explained that the country would find the union morally unacceptable, Edward ploughed on, offering the prospect of a morganatic marriage that would ensure Wallis wasn't queen. That, too, was refused and when told that if he ignored his ministers on this matter, a constitutional crisis would arise, Edward decided to abdicate.

The news stunned a country where he still held a place in people's hearts. As it became clear that Edward was leaving his throne, a new version of *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* sprang up on the streets with the second line proclaiming 'Mrs Simpson's pinched our king'. It was another indication of his popularity for, after all that had happened, he was still "their king", a people's monarch who was only leaving under duress. In reality, Edward seemed quite relieved that the whole experience was over.

His short abdication broadcast, on 11 December 1936, summed up his reign to perfection. In a clear voice he spoke of the "woman he loved", presenting the end of his reign as his choice alone. But in reality, the abdication was strikingly similar to many other aspects of the short rule of Edward VIII. He had been a king set on reigning as he saw fit, whose inability to understand the importance of the role of his elected politicians had led to insoluble clashes, but who hid it all behind a mesmeric smile and the endless charm which made his downfall all the more shocking to a people who had loved him.

Edward, while still Prince of Wales, with Stanley Baldwin who, as prime minister in 1936, had grave concerns about his new king almost from the start

The king who turned his face on tradition

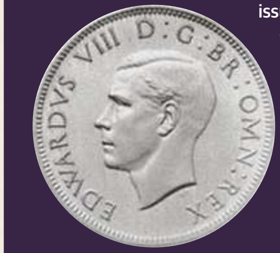
Edward's emphasis on his hair rather than tradition was an early indication that his reign would ruffle feathers

* * *

Within weeks of the accession of Edward VIII, plans were already underway for the new coins that would bear his image. The young king was, of course, given a say in how he would appear on money, but his answer surprised many. He wanted to use his best profile, partly to ensure that his hair looked smart, and in order to achieve that end he was willing to break three centuries of custom.

Since the reign of Charles II, it had been traditional for a new monarch to face the opposite direction from their predecessor on coins. George V had faced left, so Edward was expected to face right. But he didn't think that showed him at his best and it also meant the parting in his hair wouldn't be seen. Despite objections from experts, the king insisted on the left-facing profile.

The coins were duly designed and were set for production from 1 January 1937, but because of his abdication, they were never issued. Edward later asked for a set to be made but his brother, George VI, forbade it. Instead, the prototypes and moulds remain in museums, a reminder of the king who set his face against tradition.



Coins bearing the image of Edward VIII were just days away from being issued when he abdicated

A LIFE OF SCANDAL

She's remembered as the woman who almost brought down the British monarchy, but even before her affair with the Prince of Wales, Wallis Simpson lived on the edge of morality

Written by Alicea Francis

As the voice of her lover crackled over the airwaves, Wallis wept. Over her sobs, she heard him recite those immortal words: "I have found it impossible to carry the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge my duties as king as I would wish to do without the help and support of the woman I love." It was romantic, of course; a gesture fit for a queen. But the truth was that Wallis didn't want it. She would never be queen; Edward's abdication had assured that. She was nothing more than an imposter. Were she to marry him – as she knew she now must do – she would spend the rest of her life hated not only by the royal family, but by the entire nation. She found herself whispering aloud: "How could something so incredible, so monstrous, have possibly happened?"

In much the same way as her later life would be tarnished by scandal, so too were Wallis's beginnings. Her parents, Teackle Wallis Warfield – the son of a wealthy Baltimore flour merchant – and the well-bred Alice Montague, likely conceived their only child out of wedlock. "Without taking their families into their confidence, they slipped away and were married," Wallis wrote in her 1956 autobiography. Teackle had been a sickly child, and at 18 he fell ill with tuberculosis. The Montagues considered him to be a poor match for their spirited daughter, while the Warfields looked down on the family of his new wife, fearing that he would be unable to support her. Their fears were soon to be realised.

Like her parents' marriage, the exact date of Bessie Wallis Warfield's birth is unknown. What is certain, however, is the location. In 1896, Teackle and the now heavily pregnant Alice decided to spend the summer in Blue Ridge Summit, a fashionable holiday resort, in the hope that it would improve Teackle's health. It was here that Alice gave birth to a daughter, most probably on 19 June, who she named after her husband and her sister, Bessie. 'Bessie' would later be dropped to leave only the more androgynous name of Wallis. Teackle would be allowed only one photograph with his daughter, as he died just five months later.

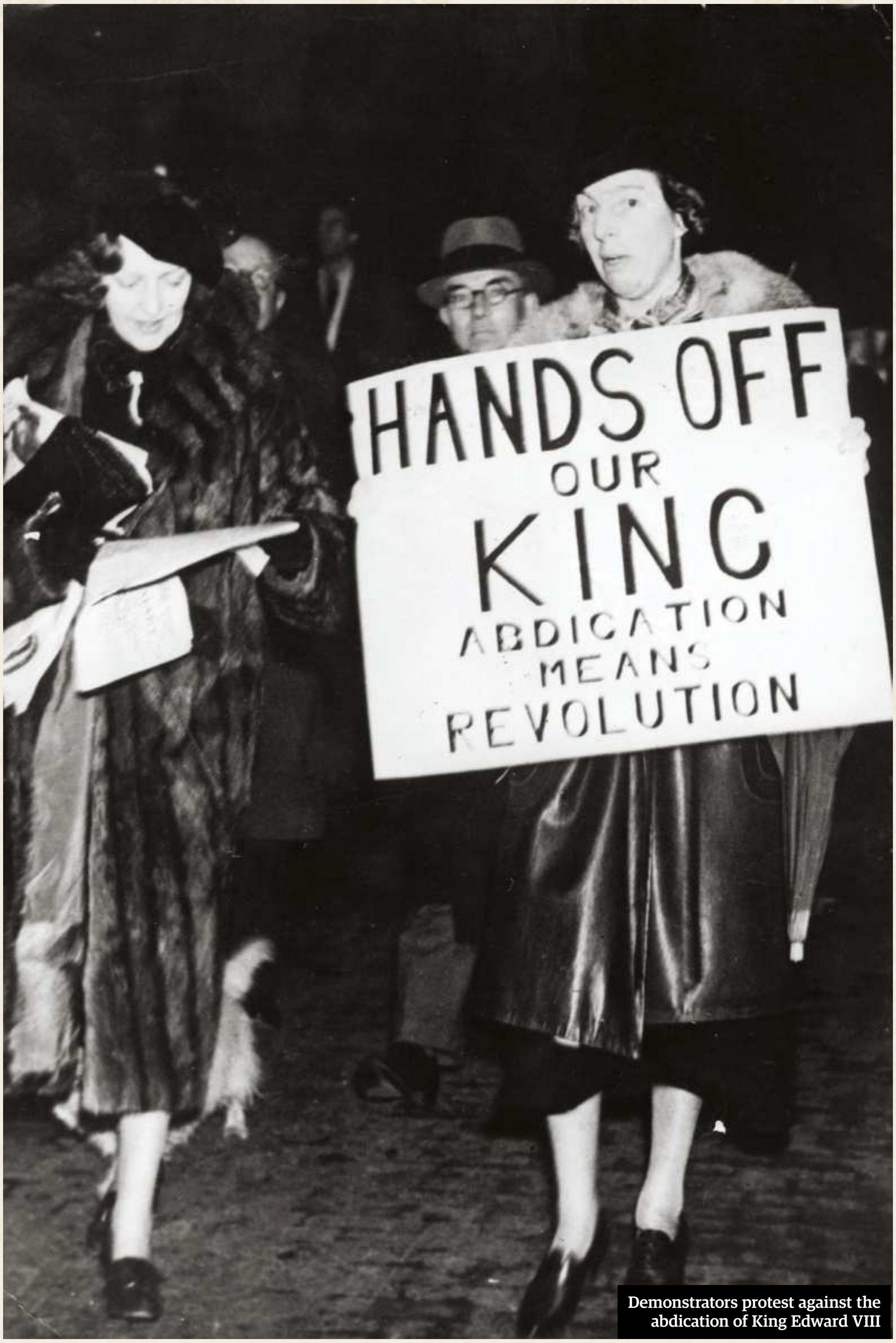
Destitute, the newly widowed Alice and her baby daughter moved in with Teackle's mother and brother, Sol. It was he who funded Wallis's livelihood and education, the first of many men who Wallis would be forced to rely on financially. He was cruel and domineering, and made unwanted advances on Alice that would eventually force her to seek new lodgings. For years Alice and Wallis moved from apartment to apartment, the insecurity of which time would haunt the future duchess for the rest of her life. Eventually, Alice remarried, and in 1912 Wallis was sent to Oldfields – the most prestigious school in Maryland. It was here that she developed her reputation for troublemaking.

The teenage Wallis was not like the other girls at Oldfields. Sporty and outspoken, she preferred the company of boys and was reported to have jumped from a balcony to meet one. Though she was not considered classically beautiful, her intelligence and quick wit gave her a sex appeal that many found irresistible. After her graduation in 1914, when she made her official debut into Baltimore society, she was considered by many to be the most popular debutante of the season. But it was during a stay with her mother's cousin two years later that Wallis would meet her first husband: Earl Winfield Spencer.

Win, as he was known, was a US Navy aviator. Handsome and of good stock, Wallis fell for him immediately, and within six months they were married. It was only on their wedding night on 8 November 1916 that Wallis realised his dependency on alcohol, when he revealed a bottle of gin hidden in his suitcase; the American South was in the midst of prohibition. For the next five years she endured a miserable marriage, a prisoner in the cage of her husband's heavy drinking – and not just metaphorically, as she claimed Win once locked her in the bathroom for hours. The following morning, she had made the decision to leave him.

Wallis would not file for divorce until 1927, but that did nothing to stop her embarking on a series of affairs. The first was with Don Felipe Espil, an Argentine diplomat who, at 35, was eight years older than Wallis. He was well travelled, well educated and worldly wise. Though he probably saw their liaison as a casual affair – she being safely married – Wallis found herself falling head over heels in love. When she discovered that he was involved with another woman, she was

Wallis and her second husband, Ernest Simpson, on their wedding day in 1928



Demonstrators protest against the abdication of King Edward VIII

devastated, and her humiliation was made public as the tabloids caught wind of the scandal. Seeing no option but to reconcile with her husband, in 1924 Wallis set sail for the Far East where Win was stationed. The reunion was to be short lived, however, as Wallis once again was driven away by his alcoholism. She sought sanctuary with her old friend Katherine Rogers, who was recently married and living in Peking. It was here that she met Count Galeazzo Ciano.

The Italian aristocrat, not yet married to Edda Mussolini – Benito's eldest child – began an affair with the American socialite. The result, according to an acquaintance, was an unwanted pregnancy and a botched abortion that left Wallis unable to have children. Though this rumour is unsubstantiated, if it were true it would prove another to be false. The rumour that Wallis suffered from Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS) is one that has circulated since the 1980s, when Wallis's biographer discussed her case with one of her doctors as she lay comatose during her final years. People with AIS are born genetically male, but as their body is insensitive to testosterone, they develop physically as a woman. It may well be simply from the fact that Wallis had masculine features that this rumour arose, but this is not consistent with the science – if Wallis did indeed have AIS and was intolerant of the male hormone, she would have been more, not less, feminine. Her alleged 1951 operation for uterine fibroids dispels this myth entirely.

Wallis remained in China for over a year, travelling alone around the country and floating from party to party. According to Hiu-Ian Koo, the wife of a Chinese diplomat, the only Mandarin phrase that Wallis learned was, "Boy, pass me the champagne". But there are other rumours about her time in the Far East. The 'China Dossier', as it is known, is allegedly a document that details all of her sexual and criminal exploits during this time, compiled by Edward's mother and/or Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. In particular, it is believed to describe the intimate techniques she acquired in the brothels and 'sing song houses', variously dubbed as the 'Baltimore grip', 'Shanghai squeeze' or the 'China clinch'. Might her sexual prowess have had something to do with her later 'grip' on Edward?

Edward and Wallis photographed at Château de Candé in 1937

“Edward soon realised he had only one option: to abdicate”

By September 1925, Wallis and her husband were back in the US, although living separately. It was at this time that she met Ernest Aldrich Simpson, a wealthy shipping executive, and, of course, married. In her memoirs, Wallis described him as, “Reserved in manner, yet with a gift of quiet wit, always well dressed, a good dancer, fond of the theatre, and obviously well read, he impressed me as an unusually well-balanced man. I had acquired a taste for the cosmopolitan mind, and Ernest obviously had one.” The then-Mrs Simpson, however, had far less flattering remarks to make about Wallis: she had, “enough of what it takes to steal a man” and “moved in and helped herself to my house and my clothes and, finally, to everything”'

It was her affair with this man that pushed Wallis to file for the long-awaited divorce from Win. Her family were appalled. Uncle Sol warned her: “I won't let you bring this disgrace upon us. What will the people of Baltimore think?” But Wallis could not be stopped. It was a timing, however, that she would come to deeply regret. In October 1927, just after the papers had been signed, Sol died. Rather than leave the woman whom he had come to see as a daughter a proportionate share in his $5 million estate, he gave a last show of disapproval by leaving Wallis a measly $15,000, along with a room in a home for “aged and indigent” women. Though she may have lost out on a fortune, Wallis was now free to marry the man she loved. The wedding took place on 21 July 1928 at a register office in London, where the couple were now based. From their Bayswater home, they began to mingle with the elite of society, and Edward, Prince of Wales, was one of them.

Wallis and Edward first met in November 1930, at a weekend house party hosted by their mutual friend – and Edward's then-lover – Lady Thelma Furness. Years later the prince would recall the moment he fell for her; while seated next to each other at luncheon, he had asked how she was coping with the cold British winter. She replied in her quick-witted and fearless manner: “Every American woman who comes to your country is asked the same question. I had hoped for something more original from the Prince

The Windsors and the Nazis

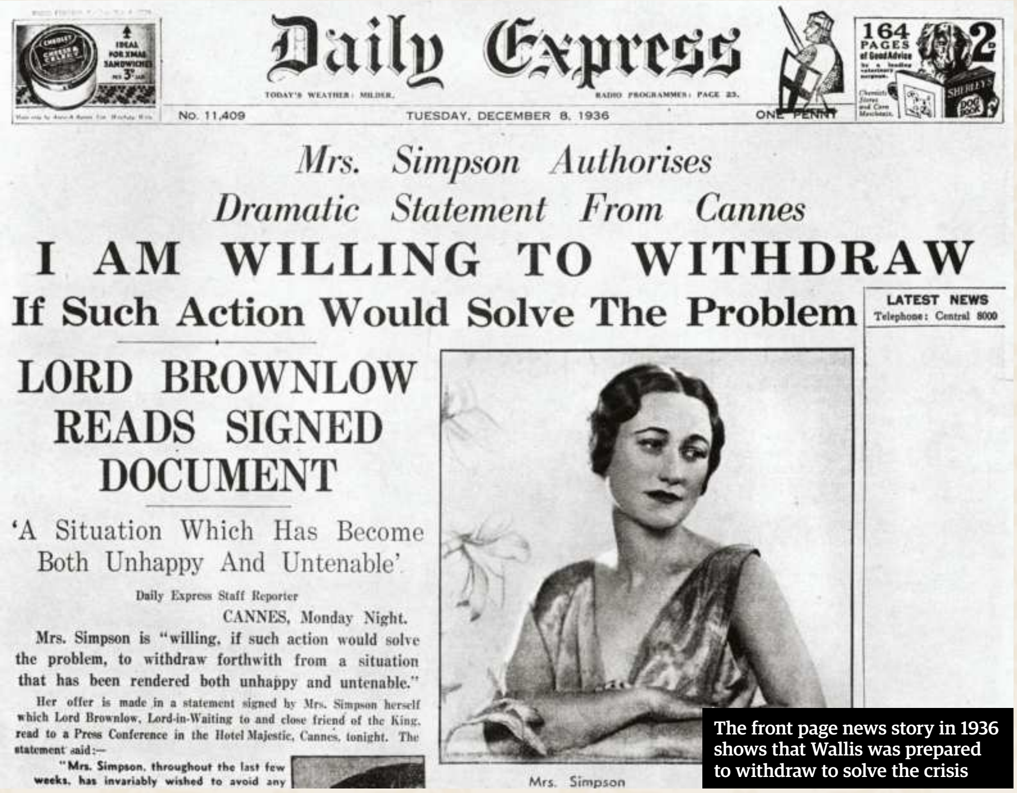
Might Britain have had a Nazi king?

The recent discovery of video footage showing Edward doing a Nazi salute – along with his young niece, the future Queen Elizabeth II – has re-raised questions about his links to the Nazi regime. He was believed to have been in favour of appeasement, having witnessed the horrors of World War I, and even believed that German fascism served a purpose in helping to defeat the communist threat that was bubbling under the surface in the east. Both he and Wallis met Hitler in a high-profile 1937 visit, and the Führer was later reported to have said: “I am certain through him permanent friendly relations could have been achieved. If he stayed, everything would have been different. His abdication was a severe loss for us.”

And it seems he was serious, as in 1940, a Nazi plot was devised to kidnap Edward and encourage him to work with Hitler either for a peace settlement or to re-install him on the throne after the German conquest of Great Britain. The plan failed, but the British government now realised the threat that the duke and duchess of Windsor posed. Rumours were circulating that Edward had passed on important Allied secrets to the German ambassador of the Hague, and Churchill decided to take desperate measures. He appointed him governor of the Bahamas, and demanded that he travel there immediately. Edward and Wallis stayed there for the remainder of the war, safely out of the reach of the Nazi clutches.

As for Wallis, there is also evidence to suggest that she was a Nazi sympathiser. Reports of an affair with leading Nazi Joachim von Ribbentrop led to an FBI investigation, the contents of which were released in 2003 under the Freedom of Information Act. It may be that her Nazi ties were the real reason why the British government and royal family forbade Edward from marrying the American socialite.

Following World War II, the duke and duchess became friends with the leader of the British Union of Fascists, Oswald Mosley, and his wife Diana. Years later, Diana would claim that Edward shared her husband's views. Might it be that Wallis actually saved Britain from having a Nazi king?



IDEAL FOR XMAS SANDWICHES

Daily Express

TODAY'S WEATHER: MILDER. RADIO PROGRAMMES: PAGE 23.

No. 11,409 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1936 ONE PENNY

164 PAGES of Good Advice 2d

Mrs. Simpson Authorises
Dramatic Statement From Cannes

I AM WILLING TO WITHDRAW

If Such Action Would Solve The Problem

LATEST NEWS
Telephone: Central 8000

LORD BROWNLOW READS SIGNED DOCUMENT

'A Situation Which Has Become Both Unhappy And Untenable'

Daily Express Staff Reporter

CANNES, Monday Night.

Mrs. Simpson is "willing, if such action would solve the problem, to withdraw forthwith from a situation that has been rendered both unhappy and untenable."

Her offer is made in a statement signed by Mrs. Simpson herself which Lord Brownlow, Lord-in-Waiting to and close friend of the King, read to a Press Conference in the Hotel Majestic, Cannes, tonight. The statement said:—

"Mrs. Simpson, throughout the last few weeks, has invariably wished to avoid any

Mrs. Simpson

The front page news story in 1936 shows that Wallis was prepared to withdraw to solve the crisis

of Wales." Seven months later, when she was presented at court – as was the custom among the upper classes – she encountered the prince once more, and overheard him say: "Something ought to be done about the lights. They make all the women look ghastly." When he later complimented her on her gown, she said: "But Sir, I understood that you thought we all looked ghastly." He looked stunned, but smiled: "I had no idea my voice carried so far."

The pair would cross paths several more times over the next few years. In January 1934, Lady Furness left London to spend some time in New York. According to Wallis, she told her: "I'm afraid the prince is going to be lonely. Won't you look after him?" Lady Furness's version of events is somewhat different, but either way, Wallis set about trying to 'cheer him up'. Edward began calling her two or three times a day, and regularly dropped by to see her. Ernest seemed unfazed; a proud royalist, he would even retire to bed early to allow his wife and the prince to stay up chatting the night away.

"Concerns were raised that she could be passing state secrets on to Nazis"

When Edward began showering Wallis with gifts, Ernest, too, was on the receiving end; after complimenting the prince on a coat, he received a bolt of houndstooth tweed, which was then made into an identical garment by the royal tailor. He would later become known as the man who sold his wife for a bolt of cloth.

It seemed too good to be true. Both men seemed content to be strung along, and she could seek comfort in the stability of her marriage to Ernest while enjoying the opulence of an affair with the Prince of Wales. However, the cracks began to show when Edward introduced her to the king and queen. His mother was outraged, ordering that Wallis be banned from attending all Silver Jubilee functions planned for the following year. Elizabeth, Duchess of York – Edward's brother George's wife and mother of the future Queen Elizabeth II – similarly took a strong disliking to "that woman". Some say that it was because she was jealous, herself having been in love with Prince Edward and reluctant to marry his younger brother. The duchess became Wallis's "implacable enemy".

Despite his family's grievances, Edward continued his affair with Wallis, and in 1935, they holidayed alone together in Europe. Ernest, meanwhile, was growing less tolerant of their indiscretion, and Wallis told Edward that they would have to see less of each other. But the prince was besotted. He continued to shower her with gifts and wait on her hand and foot, much to the amusement of his staff. However, on 20 January 1936, King George V died. The next day, Edward broke royal protocol by watching the proclamation of his accession in the company of Wallis. It was becoming very clear, both to the royal family and the government, that he would not be giving up his lover any time soon.

But beside the fact that she was a married woman, there was another, far more sinister, concern. In Germany, the Nazi threat was rising, and Wallis was known to have socialised with both the German ambassador and Hitler's special envoy Joachim von Ribbentrop – with whom she also allegedly had an affair. Concerns were raised that she could be passing state secrets on to her Nazi acquaintances, and royal hostilities towards her were fuelled further. Her and Edward's later meetings with Hitler himself would only serve to deepen the suspicion surrounding her, and leave a lasting legacy of the pair as Nazi sympathisers.

By this point, it appeared that Ernest had given up all hope of a reconciliation with his wife. When Wallis's childhood friend Mary Kirk came to stay with them, Mary and Ernest began an affair, and in July 1936, he agreed to let Wallis file for divorce on the grounds of his adultery.

The moment that the decree nisi was granted, Edward began a desperate search for a way to marry the love of his life and keep the throne. As supreme governor of the Church of England, his proposed marriage conflicted with the teachings of the Church, which did not permit

The couple as phototgraphed on their wedding day in 1937 the re-marriage of divorced people who had living spouses. Not only that, but the British and Dominion governments felt that, as a two-time divorcee, Wallis was socially, politically and morally unsuitable for a queen consort. Edward went so far as to suggest a morganatic marriage, in which Wallis would not be queen, but it was rejected by the prime ministers of Britain, Australia and South Africa. If he were to marry her, the government would be forced to resign, causing a constitutional crisis. Edward soon realised he had only one option: to abdicate.

Wallis, meanwhile, tried desperately to stop him. She later wrote: "I tried to convince [Edward] of the hopelessness of our position. To go on fighting the inevitable could only mean tragedy for him and catastrophe for me." Besides this, Wallis missed her husband Ernest and longed to return to him, as letters discovered 75 years later would reveal. But by December 1936, news of the affair had become public. She fled to the south of France, where Katherine Roberts – who a decade earlier had sheltered her in Peking – was now living. On 7 December, she issued a statement, explaining that she would "withdraw from a situation that has been rendered both unhappy and untenable." But Edward's mind was made up. Three days later, in the presence of his brothers, the king of England signed the Instrument of Abdication. On 11 December, the infamous radio broadcast was made to the world.

Wallis's divorce was finalised in May 1937, and she married Edward the following month at the Chateau de Candé, just east of Paris. The date – 3 June – would have been King George V's birthday, and Queen Mary was convinced that it was a deliberate slight. None of the royal family attended. Wallis became the Duchess of Windsor, Edward having been created a duke following his abdication, but she would not share her husband's style of 'Royal Highness' – at least, not outside of her household. While on honeymoon in Austria, she continued to write to Ernest: "I think of us so much though I try not to. I wonder so often how you are? How the business is getting on, etc. I thought I'd write a few lines to say I'd love to hear from you if you feel like telling me a bit."

But in November, Ernest married Mary, and Wallis finally accepted her fate. She and the duke lived in France until May 1940, when the Germans invaded and they were forced to flee to Spain and then Portugal. In July, the duke was appointed governor of the Bahamas, believed by many to be a scheme by the British government to prevent the couple from coming into contact with the Nazis. Here they stayed for the remainder of the war, eventually returning to France for their retirement. They visited England infrequently, Wallis making it abundantly clear that she did not wish to play any part in royal affairs: "I hate this country. I shall hate it to my grave." Nor did the royal family wish to include her. When George VI died in 1952, Edward attended the funeral alone, and neither he nor Wallis were present at Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. When Edward died from throat cancer in 1972, aged 77, Wallis was finally invited to stay at Buckingham Palace while the funeral took place – but just for three days.

The duchess spent the rest of her life a recluse, frail and suffering from dementia. Her lawyer, Suzanne Blum, assumed power of attorney and sold many of Wallis's belongings to her own friends at lower than market value. Wallis lost the power of speech in 1980, and towards the end was completely bedridden, receiving no visitors other than doctors and nurses. When she died on 24 April 1986, she was granted a funeral at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, which was attended by several members of the royal family – including her old foe Elizabeth, now the queen mother. She was buried next to Edward, her grave bearing the inscription "Wallis, Duchess of Windsor" – her fourth name in life, and the only one she had never wanted.

"Wallis missed her husband Ernest and longed to return to him"

Wallis's love letters

How a discovery made 75 years after the crisis has forced us to reassess history

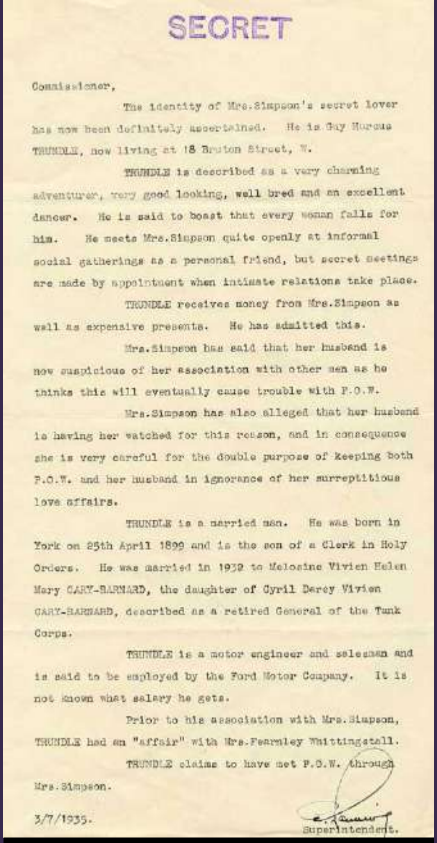
* * *

In 2011, Anne Sebba – the author of *That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor* – made a discovery that would transform our understanding of Edward and Wallis's 'fairy tale' love story. While researching for her book, she was passed a collection of names and addresses by Aharon Solomons, the only child of Ernest and Mary Kirk. Though many of his contacts couldn't provide her with any new information, one of them – who wished to remain anonymous – handed her a stack of blue letters tied up with ribbon. Dated between 1936 and 1937, these 15 previously unpublished letters had been written by Wallis in the midst of the abdication crisis, but they were not love notes to Edward; rather, they were passionate, emotionally charged letters to the man that she was about to divorce.

In them, Wallis described her "misery", writing: "I feel small and licked by it all." She was desperate to escape the situation, but Edward had threatened to kill himself if she left him. She also described her anguish at leaving Ernest: "Wasn't life lovely, sweet and simple… I can only cry as I say farewell and press your hand very tightly and pray to God." Even after the divorce had been finalised, Wallis continued writing to him. During her and Edward's controversial 1937 trip to Germany, she wrote: "Wherever you are, you can be sure that never a day goes by without some hours' thought of you."

What these letters reveal is that, contrary to previous beliefs, Wallis had not wanted to marry Edward. They also suggest that her divorce from Ernest was illegal, or at least collusive, and that his 'affair' with Mary had been arranged. Letters from Ernest to his mother, also divulged by the anonymous interviewee, corroborate this. They paint a picture of Wallis as "a woman drowning, thrashing around and blaming everyone and everything for her predicament, especially the 'stuffy British minds' and Mary."

But the fact that she eventually accepted her fate, married Edward and remained loyal until his death show that when faced with the consequences of her decision, Wallis accepted them with strength, courage and determination.



SECRET

Commissioner,

The identity of Mrs.Simpson's secret lover has now been definitely ascertained. He is Guy Marcus TRUNDLE, now living at 18 Bruton Street, W.

TRUNDLE is described as a very charming adventurer, very good looking, well bred and an excellent dancer. He is said to boast that every woman falls for him. He meets Mrs.Simpson quite openly at informal social gatherings as a personal friend, but secret meetings are made by appointment when intimate relations take place.

TRUNDLE receives money from Mrs.Simpson as well as expensive presents. He has admitted this.

Mrs.Simpson has said that her husband is now suspicious of her association with other men as he thinks this will eventually cause trouble with P.O.W.

Mrs.Simpson has also alleged that her husband is having her watched for this reason, and in consequence she is very careful for the double purpose of keeping both P.O.W. and her husband in ignorance of her surreptitious love affairs.

TRUNDLE is a married man. He was born in York on 25th April 1899 and is the son of a Clerk in Holy Orders. He was married in 1932 to Melosine Vivien Helen Mary CARY-BARNARD, the daughter of Cyril Darcy Vivien CARY-BARNARD, described as a retired General of the Tank Corps.

TRUNDLE is a motor engineer and salesman and is said to be employed by the Ford Motor Company. It is not known what salary he gets.

Prior to his association with Mrs.Simpson, TRUNDLE had an "affair" with Mrs.Fearnley Whittingstall.

TRUNDLE claims to have met P.O.W. through Mrs.Simpson.

3/7/1935.

Superintendent.

Wallis was followed by officials in an attempt to find her lovers. Here, her alleged affair with Guy Trundle, a car salesman, has been uncovered

© Getty Images, TopFoto; Press Association

THE KING'S SPEECH

As the prospect of the crown loomed for Bertie, questions were raised as to whether he would be able to speak for his nation – but one man made sure the new king was ready for his close up

Written by June Woolerton

Two days after Albert, Duke of York, became King George VI, the Archbishop of Canterbury made a public address. He praised the new monarch but added that "when his people listen to him, they will notice an occasional and momentary hesitation in his speech". Most were by then aware of the "hesitation" Cosmo Gordon Lang mentioned in an attempt to help Bertie as he took on his new role. But one man listening was furious. Lionel Logue had spent years helping the new king overcome his stammer, but now he feared that these well-intentioned words would set the new king back – just when he needed his hard-won self-confidence most of all.

Many of Bertie's problems with his stammer had stemmed from a lack of self-belief. Using confidence-building techniques as well as breathing exercises, Logue had helped the prince who had become his friend to approach public speaking and private conversation with equal measures of calm. In fact, he had done so well that in 1934 a journalist had remarked that while there were still pauses in the duke of York's public speeches, they now added "solemnity" to his remarks – the same writer said the hesitations had once been "disturbing".

Bertie had come a long way but the pressures of the Abdication Crisis and his rise to the throne were the greatest challenges he had yet faced. The anxiety that produced was evident in the speech he gave before the Accession Council held at St James' Palace at the start of his reign. As he read a few short typewritten sentences his address was filled with hesitations and pauses. As he contemplated his new public role and the prospect of his coronation, with its ancient vows and the now expected modern broadcast to the empire afterwards, he once more turned to Lionel Logue.

Not that the Australian-born speech therapist had ever been that far away. Since he first entered royal circles in 1926, after the duke of York experienced a particularly difficult time delivering his speech at the end of the British Empire Exhibition, Logue had become a close confidante and supporter of Bertie. They met regularly, and now they began to increase their sessions as they prepared for the coronation. It would be the greatest test of the stammer that Bertie had struggled with since his childhood.

The prince's stutter was evident from an early age. When Lady Airlie arrived in the household of his parents to act as a lady in waiting to his mother she noticed it almost straight away. She wrote that Bertie could be shy and reticent but when he got used to her "he talked to me quite normally, without stammering". At the time the prince was just six years old. It began to make him self-conscious, and when he sat an interview for the Royal Naval College at Osborne in 1908 he stammered initially before composing himself. But many of those around him witnessed fits of anger, driven by frustration at his stutter and the shyness it engendered.

Bertie himself was increasingly aware as he grew up that his stutter improved and almost disappeared when he was relaxed. In 1913, his naval training took him on a tour aboard HMS Cumberland, which included a stop in Jamaica where the prince was required to make a speech that ended up filled with hesitations. But as that tour came to an end in Canada a much more relaxed prince noticed that he barely stuttered at all when enjoying the company of friends or playing sport.

In his early twenties, as he took on more engagements for his family, he recognised that formal speeches were most likely to cause him to stutter, while off-the-cuff conversations with people rarely led to stammering. However, even the most basic chat with those of whom he was in awe, including his own father, could lead to his stutter returning.

As early as 1919, Bertie consulted speech therapists to try and get rid of his stammer, and in the early 1920s he saw a variety of experts, but none had a noticeable effect. While his more informal work provided a level of enjoyment, high-profile and state engagements continued to cause him so much anxiety that he began to dread them and often stuttered while speaking at them. In private he had no qualms about expressing his anxiety over the speeches he had to make and in 1925 told friends and family that he was dreading having to make an address at the British Empire Exhibition in London. The speech was painful to listen to and caused Bertie as much anxiety after its delivery as it had done before. However, it would also prove to be the turning point in his struggle with his stammer, for listening to the speech was Lionel Logue, who had just set up home in London.

Born in Adelaide, Australia, in 1880, Logue took elocution classes as a teenager from Edward Reeves and ended up as his assistant teacher. He moved to Perth at the start of the 20th century and soon built up a reputation as an instructor in elocution and public speaking. Alongside his wife Myrtle, he took several overseas trips to study public speaking, but it was his work

King George VI makes his coronation address to the empire. The speech was a huge success despite royal reservations helping shell-shocked veterans in World War I that really cemented his reputation. Logue developed methods to help them overcome speech impairments caused by the trauma of their time in the trenches. His kindness and determination to rebuild their self-esteem as part of his therapy brought him a level of fame if not much of a fortune. In 1924, he headed to London with Myrtle and their three children and set himself up in Harley Street, where he would soon welcome Bertie as a client.

The second in line to the throne was a reluctant patient at first. Logue was recommended to the duke of York, who finally consented to see him in October 1926 when his wife Elizabeth pressed him into it. Both at this point were desperate for support. They knew that early the following year they would undertake a six-month tour that would include a visit to Australia, and that country's prime minister, Stanley Bruce, had already expressed concerns that Bertie's stutter and anxiety over it made him far from the ideal candidate for such a high-profile trip.

The duke of York first met Lionel Logue on 19 October 1926. The speech therapist later wrote that at the end of that initial session, Bertie had "hope once more in his heart".

The effects of Logue's treatment were startling. He gave Bertie a series of breathing exercises to carry out every day as well as instructing him to say vowels out loud and use tongue twisters to help him exercise his voice. But the most important part of his therapy was his psychological approach. Logue encouraged Bertie to view his stammer as something that could be cured and an issue that he himself could overcome and control.

For the next ten weeks the two men saw each other almost every day, and by Christmas 1926 the results were clear for everyone to hear. Bertie himself wrote that "now I know the right way to breathe, my fear of talking will vanish".

That new-found self-confidence turned his tour of Australia and New Zealand into a huge success. Logue had refused the offer to travel with the duke and duchess of York, stating that it was important that Bertie learned to rely on himself. Whatever private anxieties he felt, the prince kept them to himself. Almost as soon as he arrived in New Zealand he was called upon to make a speech, which those present described as faultless. And it wasn't just his public speaking that improved through his work with Logue.

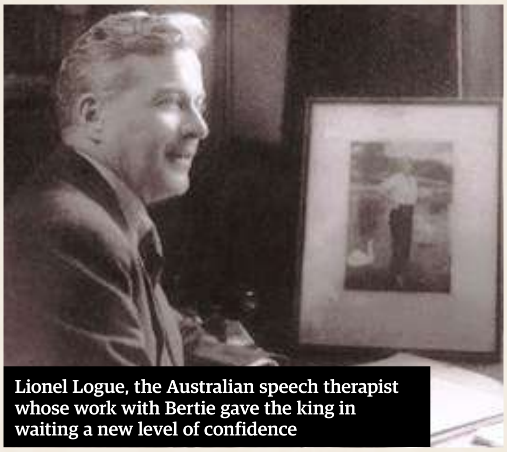
After years of struggling to communicate with his father, Bertie began to relax more while chatting with him, to such an extent that George V spoke of having "several talks with him". The duke of York told Logue that he now talked a lot to his father "and I have had no trouble at all".

> "Logue encouraged Bertie to view his stammer as something that could be cured and overcome"

George and Elizabeth's state visit to France in 1938 was seen as a vital diplomatic mission as the spectre of war hung over Europe

Bertie found conversation with his father George V very difficult at times

Bertie and Logue continued to meet regularly, and the prince reaped the rewards. His speeches, although lacking the flair and charm of the addresses given by his older brother, the Prince of Wales, were fluent and well received, and he no longer dreaded meeting people or making small talk with those he encountered on public engagements. Even when he became heir to the throne in January 1936 on the death of King George V he continued to approach his public life with confidence. However, the Abdication Crisis sent him into a spiral of anxiety. Those who saw the new king in the days after his accession spoke of him being disengaged with everything going on around him as he contemplated the many changes taking place.


Lionel Logue, the Australian speech therapist whose work with Bertie gave the king in waiting a new level of confidence

However, there was one alteration he refused to make. The Archbishop of Canterbury, having focused on the speech impediment of the new king in an attempt to help him, then offered more assistance behind the scenes by suggesting George VI find a new therapist to help him prepare for the coronation. The idea was rejected, and almost immediately Bertie began working with Logue to ensure that his coronation went perfectly.

There was a lot for them to do. Early on in their professional relationship they had discovered that George VI had a dislike of some words and the

A friendship that lasted beyond the grave

Lionel Logue was more than an adviser to George VI, as letters written after the king's death show

A few weeks after the funeral of King George VI, Lionel Logue wrote to the Queen Mother to express his sorrow. Yet this was no formal letter from courtier to queen – this was a personal note that showed the deep bond that had formed between the speech therapist and the royal family.

Logue told the Queen Mother that George VI had "honoured me, by allowing me to help him with his speech, and no man ever worked as hard as he did, and achieved such a grand result". Logue also had kind words for the widowed queen, telling her, "You were a tower of strength to him."

When the Queen Mother wrote back to Logue a few days later, she told him, "I know perhaps better than anyone just how much you helped the king, not only with his speech but through that his whole life and outlook on life," adding, "I shall always be deeply grateful for all you did for him."

That gratitude had already been confirmed with royal decorations before George VI died. In 1937, Logue was made a Member of the Royal Victorian Order by Bertie and was elevated to Commander in 1944 by the king who had become his friend.

As the Queen Mother adjusted to life without her husband she received words of kindness from Lionel Logue

prospect of saying them made him so anxious that his stutter got worse. Among the words he found hard to say were 'king' and 'queen', and so they had to be replaced with 'their majesties'. Whenever Bertie had a big speech to make they would go through it to take out words that caused anxiety and phrase the address so that it was easy and stress free to deliver. But both knew that the coronation ceremony, with its ancient oaths, couldn't be altered. So they set about an intensive round of rehearsals, practising the words and phrases as often as possible so that they were familiar and comfortable to the king.

Logue was at Westminster Abbey to watch and listen to the coronation as George VI made his ancient vows before thousands of people. The ceremony was also filmed by around 40 newsreel cameras and the duke of Norfolk and the Archbishop of Canterbury had insisted on a final say over what was included in the material sent around the world, in case they had to cut out stammering by the new king. Neither they, nor Logue, had anything to worry about. The new king was word perfect.

However, there was one more ordeal for Bertie to go through that day. He was expected to make

Bertie's toughest speech

One address caused the Duke of York more anxiety than any other as the empire hung on his every word

The British Empire Exhibition had been one of the successes of its time. The event, which ran at Wembley from April 1924 until October 1925, attracted over 17 million visitors while its organisers hoped it would boost trade and strengthen ties between the countries in the empire. George V opened the exhibition while Edward, Prince of Wales, was president of the Organising Committee. but when the formal closing ceremony took place on 31 October 1925, it was Albert, Duke of York, who spoke to the Empire.

Bertie had been dreading the moment he had to stand up in front of the microphones for weeks, writing to his father "I do hope I shall do it well…but I shall be frightened." Not only did the shy duke of York have to speak in front of the tens of thousands at the event itself, he was also surrounded by radio microphones as the address was being broadcast around the empire.

The anxiety took a terrible toll on Bertie. He stammered through much of the speech, his hesitations increasing as he became more worried about completing the address. George V wrote to another of his children, "Bertie got through his speech…but there were some rather long pauses". It was a painful experience for the duke of York but one that only sharpened his resolve to conquer his stutter.

Bertie and Elizabeth enjoying the British Empire Exhibition. His speech at the closing events was agonising for him to make and his family to hear

George VI and Queen Elizabeth's popularity grew quickly in the early years of his reign, with huge crowds turning out for a visit to Lancashire in 1938

As war approached in 1939, the microphone and public speaking no longer held fear for George VI, thanks in no small part to the constant support of his wife

> "With the shadow of war growing ever larger, George VI was cultivating friends for the fight"

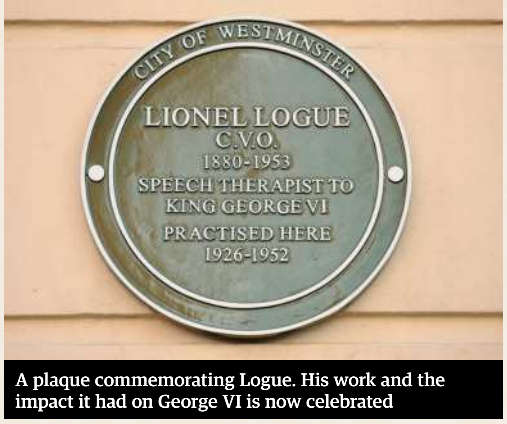
a live broadcast to his empire on the evening of his coronation. Again, Logue had spent hours practising with him, but he had also had help from Robert Wood, a sound engineer at the BBC who showed the king how to make the best use of a microphone and helped him overcome the anxiety that the broadcasting equipment produced. Despite stumbling in some of his rehearsals, King George VI once more delivered a word-perfect performance.

It helped to cement his reputation as a reliable and trustworthy monarch, stabilising the House of Windsor after a year that had rocked it to its foundations. Even so, George now had to build on that beginning. He expressed more anxiety over the prospect of opening Parliament for the first time, raising concerns that his Speech from the Throne would mean talking in a seated position that might inhibit the breathing techniques he now relied on to get him through public addresses. With the help of Logue, he overcame those concerns and delivered another strong performance. He also called on his speech therapist to help him deliver his Christmas broadcast of 1937. However, although the king sounded calm, his words showed how much stress public speaking still caused him as he told his listeners he had no plans to make the festive address an annual tradition.

That did little to quell the growing popularity of the new king and his young royal family. 'Us Four', as Bertie so fondly called them, quickly became the darlings of the press and the public, with big crowds turning out to see the king and queen on public engagements. When they visited Paris on a state visit in 1938 their appeal spread to the continent. While Elizabeth was feted for her Norman Hartnell-designed wardrobe, her husband made a series of speeches and addresses that were praised for their diplomacy at a difficult time. With the shadow of war looming ever larger, George VI was cultivating friends for the fight ahead and proving himself an effective statesman.

Soon, Logue was called on to help the king prepare for the biggest speech of his life so far. When Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, George VI addressed the nation, speaking in a calm, steady voice. By then his popularity was well entrenched, helped in no small part by the work of Lionel Logue, who had turned the shy and stammering Bertie into a statesman with a global reputation to go with it.

When war broke out in 1939, George VI's calm and confident speech to the nation rallied spirits across the country



A plaque commemorating Logue. His work and the impact it had on George VI is now celebrated

© Getty

FROM BLITZ TO VICTORY

GEORGE VI'S LAST STAND

As Hitler's forces devastated Europe, Britain's king became a figurehead for the fight against fascism

Written by Denis Judd

George VI was an exceptionally committed and active Head of State during the perils and crises of the Second World War, ultimately playing a crucial role in leading the nation and the British Empire and Commonwealth to final victory over the Axis powers of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. When he became King-Emperor after the traumatic abdication of his brother Edward VIII in 1936, however, there were some within the establishment who feared the new king might not be up to the job, even in peacetime. More sensibly, the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin realised that "there is a lot of prejudice against him. He's had no chance to capture the popular imagination as his brother did. I'm afraid he won't find it easy going for the first year or two."

Despite George VI's deep personal misgivings as he ascended the throne, the media, especially in Britain, was quick to come to the rescue. It presented a cosy, reassuring image of the new royal family: a monogamous and loving couple at its head, with their two adored, demure and wholesome daughters, pictured together in the garden, or perhaps sitting round a roaring sitting room fire while reading, chatting, stroking a dog and doing what millions of others might well be doing in countless semi-detached houses or country cottages. The temptation to identify with what appeared – at first sight anyway – to be merely another comfortable, happy and unpretentious suburban nuclear family was irresistible. The image was to be reinforced many times over as the King and his family faced the everyday dangers and disruptions that the British people experienced during the Second World War.

Although he had fewer than three years upon the throne before the war, King George himself was to rise to the exceptional challenges of a wartime kingship with considerable success. Among his best qualities was his capacity to adapt to his dramatically changed circumstances after 1936 and to absorb what was required of him as monarch. No great scholar or bookworm in his early life, George VI proved a very quick learner indeed after his accession to the throne.

He also understood the limitations of his role and influence as a constitutional monarch. Still suffering, despite the vast improvements achieved through his work with the speech therapist Lionel Logue from a sometimes hesitant delivery of public speeches, he could not aspire to rhetorical flights and vivid verbal imagery while addressing and swaying huge audiences.

What he could deliver, however, were plain, completely sincere addresses – many broadcast by BBC Radio – which enabled him to connect with his mass audiences at home and throughout the British Commonwealth and Empire in ways eschewed by more flowery orators.

George VI with his family and mixture of dogs at the Royal Lodge, Windsor

EXPRESS
SPECIAL LATE NEWS
BRITAIN DECLARES WAR

A newspaper seller holds a poster stating that war has been declared

> "Churchill set about creating his wartime coalition government, in which leading Conservatives, Labours and Liberals played vital parts"

Nor did he waste his time demanding that he got his own way over wartime policy, or in obstructing, either overtly or covertly, developments of which he disapproved. This was not his function or his duty, and, in any case, between 1940 and 1945 he had a prime minister in Winston Churchill who was not just fully in charge of momentous policies and strategies, but with whom he forged an exceptionally close and creative relationship as well.

Perhaps surprisingly, George VI had keenly regretted the resignation of his first wartime prime minister, Neville Chamberlain. When Chamberlain, amid the ruins of his pre-war policy of appeasing Hitler, eventually resigned in May 1940 as France was crashing to unexpected, catastrophic defeat, the king was deeply concerned, writing: "It is most unfair on Chamberlain to be treated like this after all his good work". This heartfelt lament partly reflected the fact that the king had strongly supported Chamberlain's high-risk policy of appeasement, and partly illustrates how much he relied upon good working relations with his prime ministers and became anxious at the prospect of forging new ones.

Somewhat reluctantly, the king invited Churchill to succeed Chamberlain, recognising that "there was only one person that I could send for to form a government, who had the confidence of the country, and that was Winston". Accordingly, Churchill set about creating his wartime coalition government, in which leading Conservative, Labour and Liberal statesmen played vital parts, with the opposition leader Clement Attlee serving as deputy prime minister.

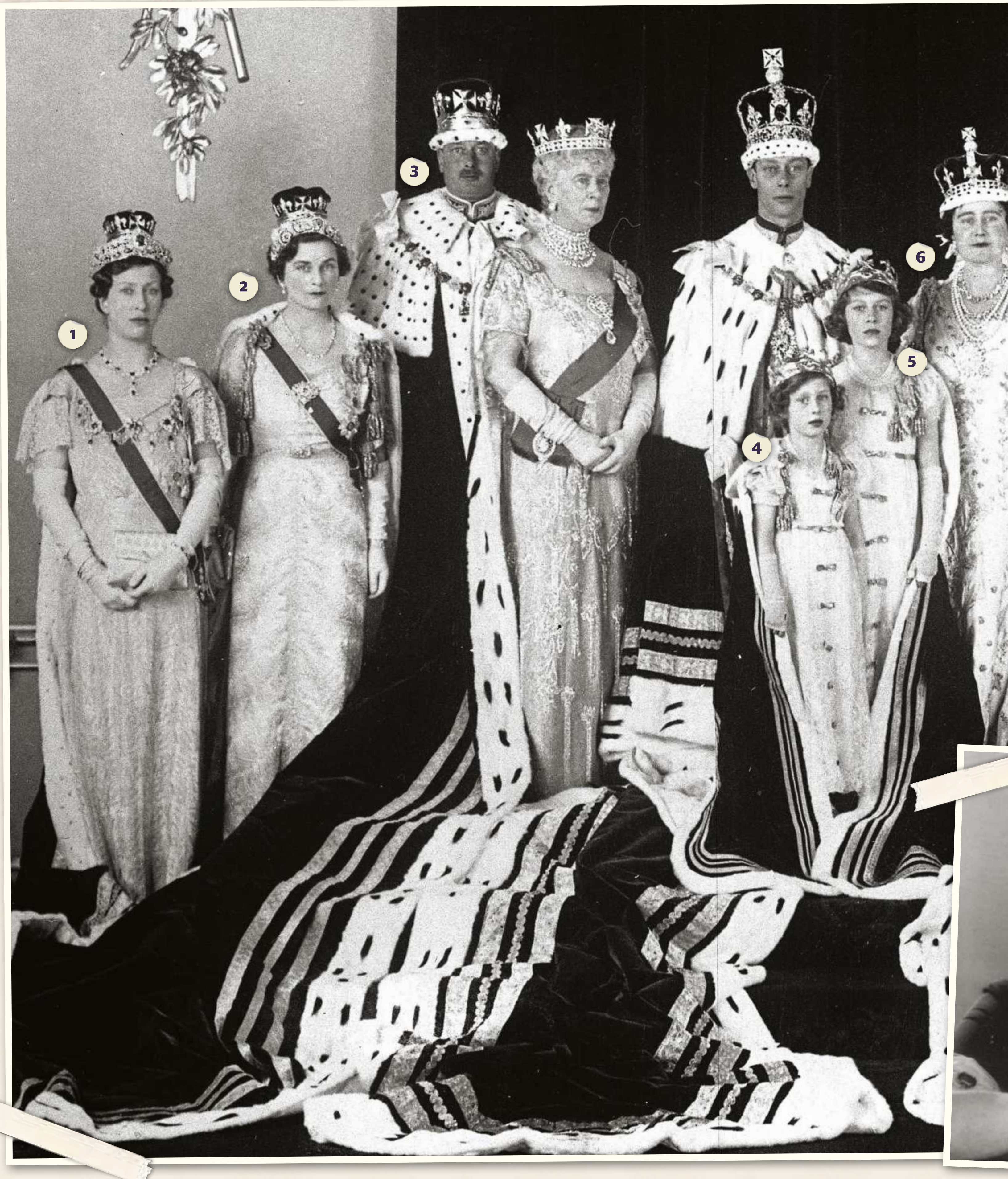
Why did George VI express misgivings over appointing Churchill? One reason is that he saw his new premier as something of a political maverick; too mercurial and unreliable to be able to trust completely. A man, indeed, who showed little hesitation in changing his fundamental political loyalties, or in defying party policy, as with the progress of Indian independence during

George VI and Queen Elizabeth entertain First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt on the presidential couple's trip to London, 1942

On the first evening of war in 1939, George VI issued a radio broadcast to the nation

the 1930s, or more critically over appeasement. Churchill had also been a strong supporter of Edward VIII during the Abdication Crisis. The two men were also very different in their personalities, since King George VI was essentially shy, modest and a chronic worrier, whereas Churchill was ebullient, forceful and apparently sure of his own superior abilities, and, despite his personal struggles with bouts of depression, a leader who exuded complete self-confidence.

In fact, George VI provided the perfect foil to his expansive, eloquent and larger-than-life wartime prime minister. Soon the king was "regarding the prime minister's audiences with pleasurable anticipation. He had fruitful opportunities for a common unburdening of mind, and by September [1940] the formal audiences had been replaced by regular Tuesday luncheons, at which the king and his prime minister serving themselves from a side-table, would transact State business, undisturbed save by an occasional air-raid." In February 1941 the king wrote in his diary, "I could not have a better prime minister". Their different styles might best be illustrated by an incident in 1942, as the crucial battle of El Alamein was underway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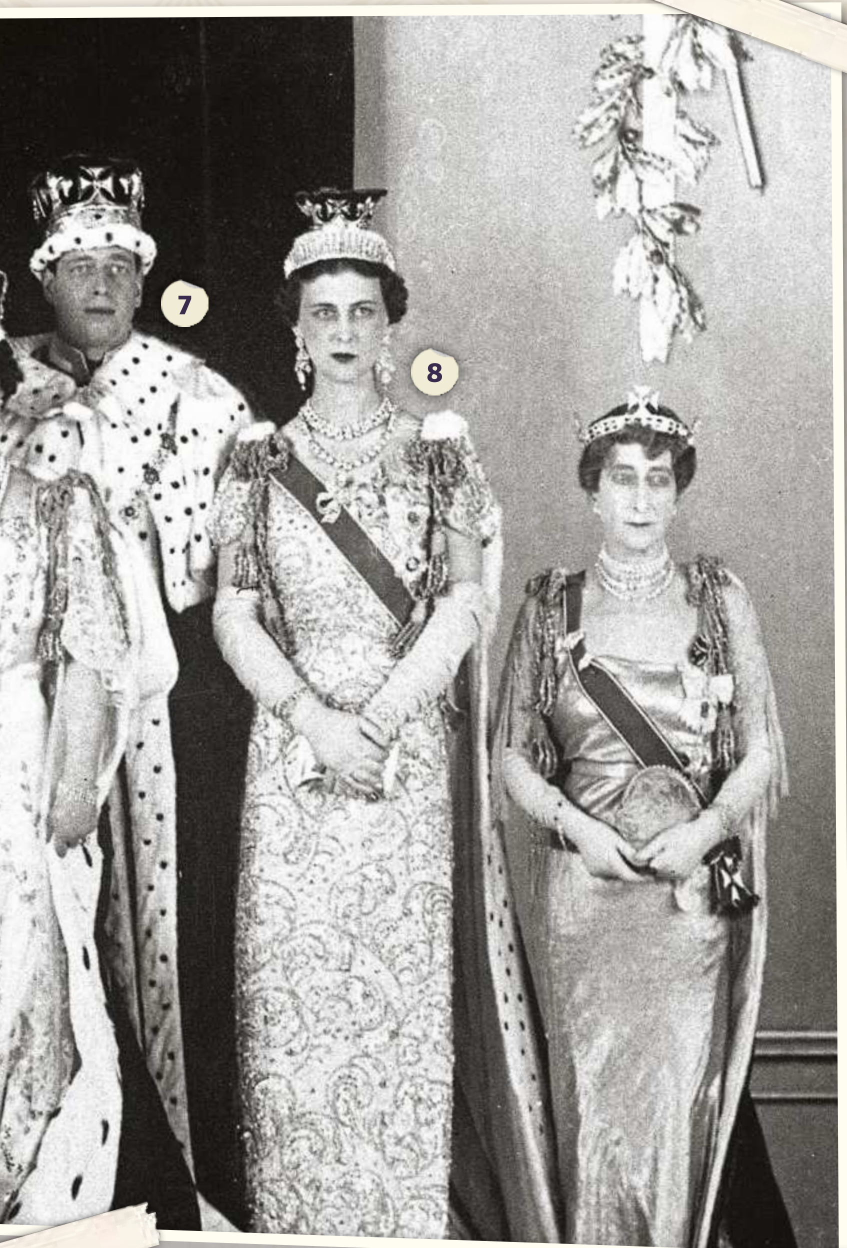
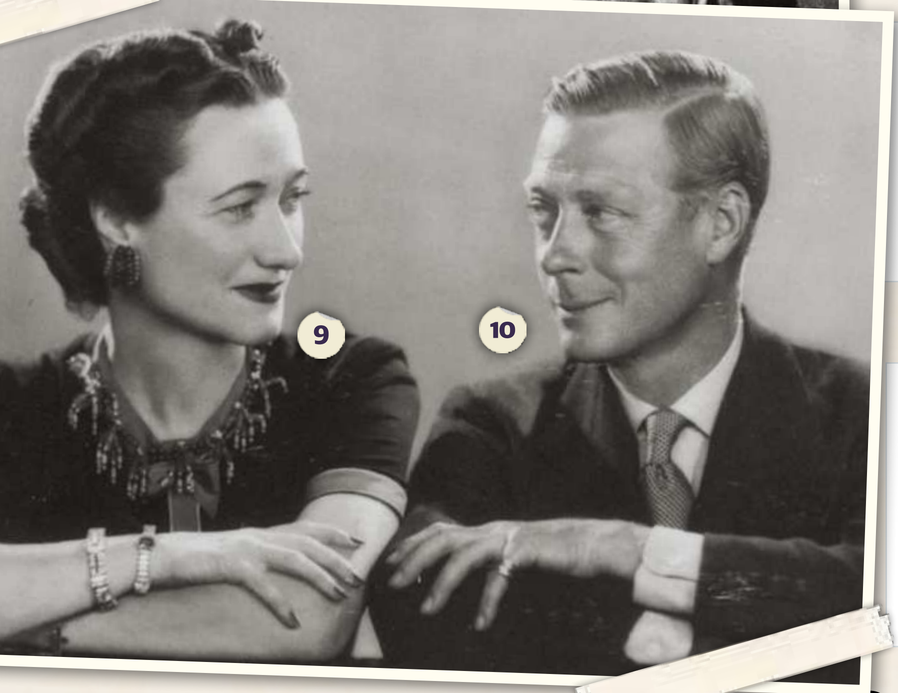




The Windsors at war

George's wartime service is celebrated to this day, but how did his family play their part?

1. Mary, Princess Royal
b.1897-d.1965
Princess Mary, the king's only sister, became Chief Controller and later Commandant of the Auxiliary Territorial Serve (the ATS, to be renamed the Women's Royal Army Corps after the war). She visited units of the ATS as well as various wartime canteens and welfare organisations.

2. Alice, Duchess of Gloucester
b.1901-d.2004
Alice worked with both the Red Cross as well as the Order of St John. She was the Queen's Deputy as Commandant-in-Chief of the Nursing Corps. When war began, she was appointed Head of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (the WAAF), becoming its Director and Air Chief Commandant in 1943.

3. Henry, Duke of Gloucester
b.1900-d.1974
The King's younger brother, Prince Henry had pursued a career in the British Army and was made a Major General in 1937. When the war began, he was appointed Chief Liaison Officer to the British Expeditionary Force sent to France. A proposal made in the House of Commons in 1942 that he be made Commander-in Chief of the Army was quickly squashed.

4. Princess Margaret
b.1930-d.2002
Though too young to join the ATS, Princess Margaret often appeared in various morale-boosting press photographs, like tending the allotment she shared with her sister and learning how to operate a stirrup pump in order to put out fires caused by bombing. She appeared often in family photographs.

5. Princess Elizabeth
b.1926
The current British monarch made a very popular wartime BBC Radio broadcast in 1940 on 'Children's Hour', and was often pictured in the press. In 1945 she became a Second Lieutenant in the ATS where she learned how to drive and service army trucks, becoming especially knowledgeable on the subject of sparking plugs.

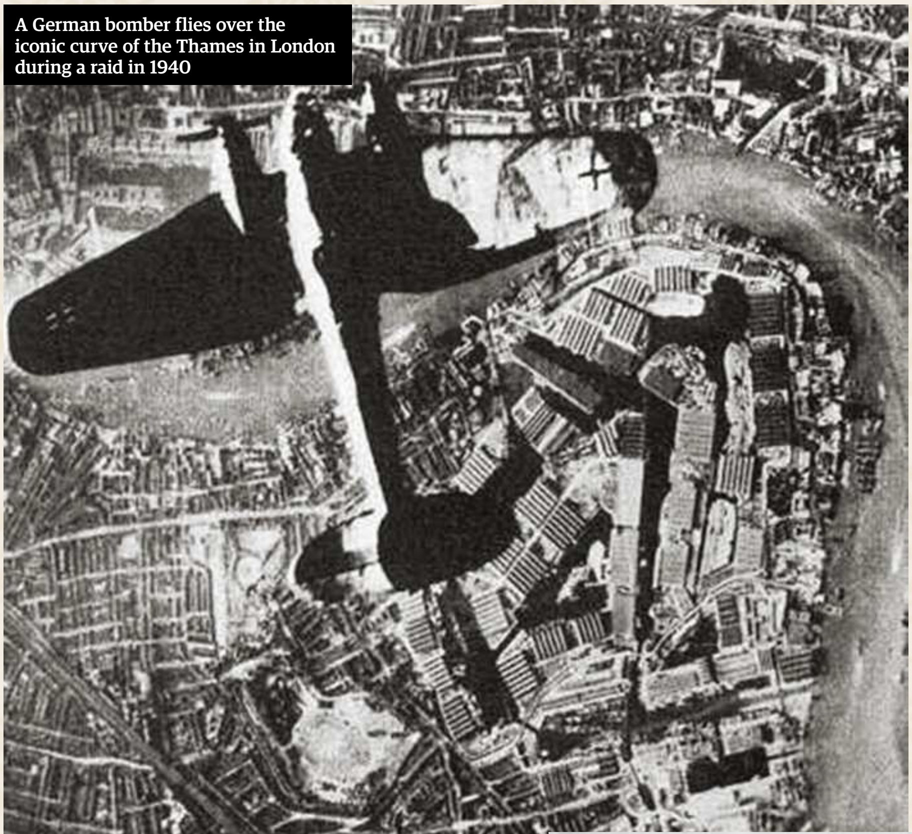
6. Queen Elizabeth
b.1900-d.2002
The king's consort's main role during the war was to support her husband in his many wartime activities, especially visiting bombed areas and generally showing that the monarchy was as involved as ordinary people in the struggle for victory. Her sunny personality was a powerful factor in maintaining high national morale.

7. George, Duke of Kent
b.1902-d.1942
The king's youngest surviving brother, Prince George was appointed an Air Vice Marshal in the Royal Air Force when the war broke out. George was an effective public speaker, and even went to the United States in 1941 where, for example, he personally addressed aircraft workers in Baltimore, Maryland. Tragically, in 1942 he was killed on a tour of duty when the plane carrying him crashed in the Scottish Highlands.

8. Marina, Duchess of Kent
b.1906-d.1968
Widowed in 1942, the duchess continued to play an active role in promoting the Red Cross and the First Aid Service. One photograph from 1943 shows her joining a forces sing-song at the United Nations Forces' Club in London.

9. Wallis, Duchess of Windsor
b.1896-d.1986
Thought to have been far too sympathetic towards the Nazi regime before the Second World War began, Wallis, Duchess of Windsor loyally played her part by helping her husband carry out his official royal duties abroad in the Bahamas.

10. Edward, Duke of Windsor
b.1894-d.1972
Despite his ill-judged visit to Nazi Germany in 1937, where he was photographed with the duchess being warmly welcomed by a beaming Adolf Hitler, the former king wished to serve his country once the Second World War broke out. After spending a largely unprofitable time in Madrid, Spain, he was eventually made Governor-General of the British colony of the Bahamas in 1940, where he served until 1945.

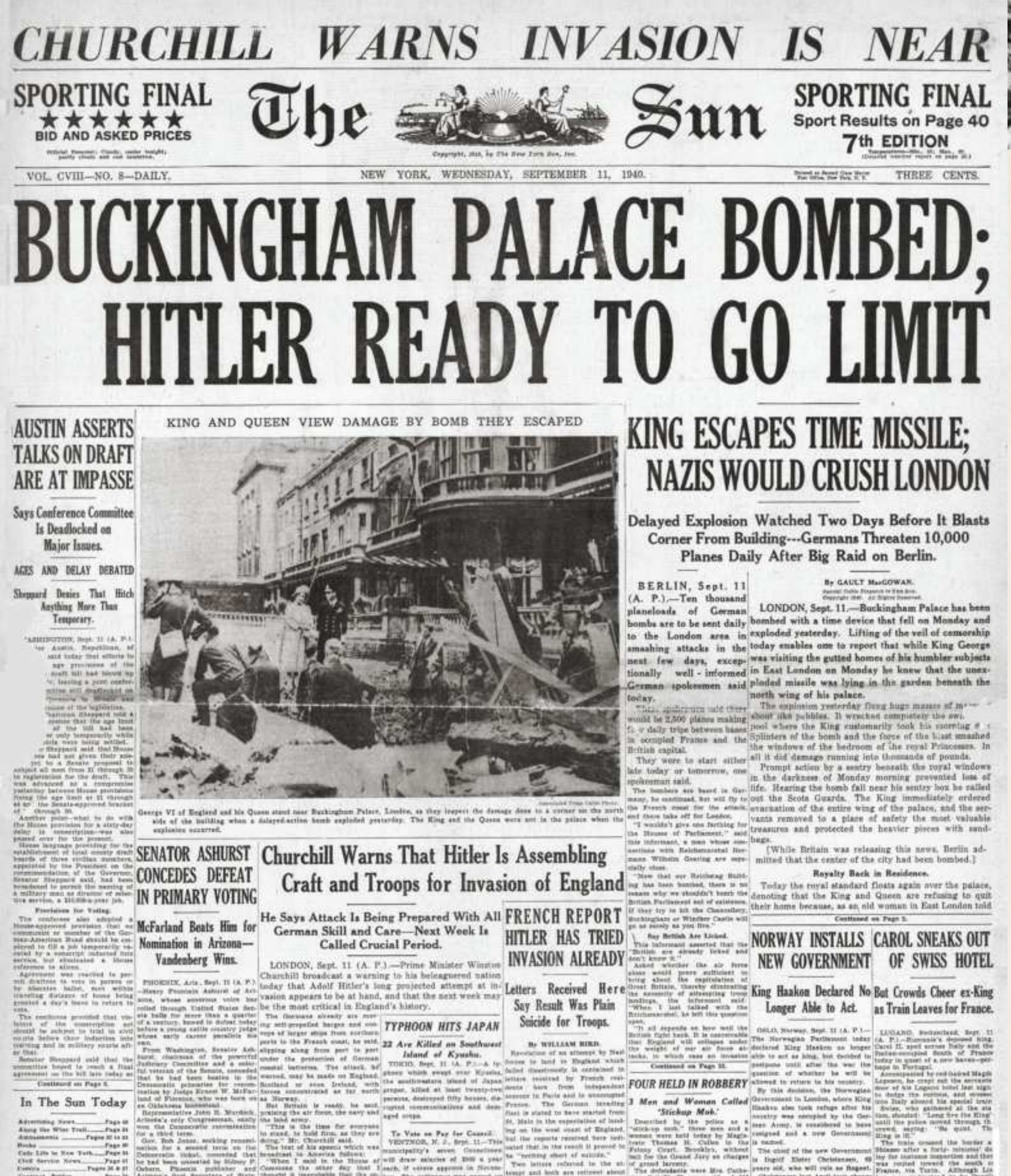


A German bomber flies over the iconic curve of the Thames in London during a raid in 1940

George and Elizabeth inspect the damage to Buckingham Palace after a bombing

in North Africa and Churchill was dining at Buckingham Palace. Conscious of the momentous struggle underway between the Eighth Army and allied troops and Rommel's Afrika Corps, the prime minister fidgeted and showed signs of tension, finally excusing himself and leaving the room to telephone 10 Downing Street for news. He returned in a joyful mood, loudly and enthusiastically singing 'Roll Out The Barrel'.

As the people of Britain and the Empire-Commonwealth, following France's surrender, braced themselves for the ordeal of 'standing alone', it seemed far better to be led jointly by a prime minister who exuded self-belief and who could conjure up support from past triumphs of national history, and by a monarch who refused to move out of London in daytime during the Blitz and who, in the interests of national economy, took the time earnestly to paint lines low inside all the baths in Buckingham Palace to show how deep to make the hot water. The king's generally simple tastes and his disinclination towards luxury fitted admirably with the wartime privations of his subjects. Food rationing was strictly enforced at the royal palaces. Once, offering a visitor a sandwich for lunch, the king remarked, "I don't know what's in these. Sawdust I expect". He drank



CHURCHILL WARNS INVASION IS NEAR

SPORTING FINAL
★★★★★★
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The Sun

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SPORTING FINAL
Sport Results on Page 40
7th EDITION

VOL. CVIII—NO. 8—DAILY. NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1940. THREE CENTS.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE BOMBED; HITLER READY TO GO LIMIT

AUSTIN ASSERTS TALKS ON DRAFT ARE AT IMPASSE

Says Conference Committee Is Deadlocked on Major Issues.

AGES AND DELAY DEBATED

Sheppard Denies That Hitch Anything More Than Temporary.

Provisions for Voting.

Continued on Page 5.

In The Sun Today

KING AND QUEEN VIEW DAMAGE BY BOMB THEY ESCAPED

George VI of England and his Queen stand near Buckingham Palace, London, as they inspect the damage done to a corner on the north side of the building when a delayed-action bomb exploded yesterday. The King and the Queen were not in the palace when the explosion occurred.

KING ESCAPES TIME MISSILE; NAZIS WOULD CRUSH LONDON

Delayed Explosion Watched Two Days Before It Blasts Corner From Building---Germans Threaten 10,000 Planes Daily After Big Raid on Berlin.

BERLIN, Sept. 11 (A. P.).—Ten thousand planeloads of German bombs are to be sent daily to the London area in smashing attacks in the next few days, exceptionally well-informed German spokesmen said today.

These spokesmen said there would be 2,500 planes making four daily trips between bases in occupied France and the British capital.

They were to start either late today or tomorrow, one spokesman said.

Say British Are Licked.

Continued on Page 12.

By GAULT MacGOWAN.

LONDON, Sept. 11.—Buckingham Palace has been bombed with a time device that fell on Monday and exploded yesterday. Lifting of the veil of censorship today enables one to report that while King George was visiting the gutted homes of his humbler subjects in East London on Monday he knew that the unexploded missile was lying in the garden beneath the north wing of his palace.

The explosion yesterday flung huge masses of [illegible] about like pebbles. It wrecked completely the swi[illegible] pool where the King customarily took his morning [illegible] Splinters of the bomb and the force of the blast smashed the windows of the bedroom of the royal Princesses. In all it did damage running into thousands of pounds.

Prompt action by a sentry beneath the royal windows in the darkness of Monday morning prevented loss of life. Hearing the bomb fall near his sentry box he called out the Scots Guards. The King immediately ordered evacuation of the entire wing of the palace, and the servants removed to a place of safety the most valuable treasures and protected the heavier pieces with sandbags.

[While Britain was releasing this news, Berlin admitted that the center of the city had been bombed.]

Royalty Back in Residence.

Today the royal standard floats again over the palace, denoting that the King and Queen are refusing to quit their home because, as an old woman in East London told

Continued on Page 2.

SENATOR ASHURST CONCEDES DEFEAT IN PRIMARY VOTING

McFarland Beats Him for Nomination in Arizona—Vandenberg Wins.

Churchill Warns That Hitler Is Assembling Craft and Troops for Invasion of England

He Says Attack Is Being Prepared With All German Skill and Care—Next Week Is Called Crucial Period.

LONDON, Sept. 11 (A. P.).—Prime Minister Winston Churchill broadcast a warning to his beleaguered nation today that Adolf Hitler's long projected attempt at invasion appears to be at hand, and that the next week may be the most critical in England's history.

TYPHOON HITS JAPAN

22 Are Killed on Southwest Island of Kyushu.

To Vote on Pay for Council.

FRENCH REPORT HITLER HAS TRIED INVASION ALREADY

Letters Received Here Say Result Was Plain Suicide for Troops.

By WILLIAM BIRD.

FOUR HELD IN ROBBERY

3 Men and Woman Called 'Stickup Mob.'

NORWAY INSTALLS NEW GOVERNMENT

King Haakon Declared No Longer Able to Act.

CAROL SNEAKS OUT OF SWISS HOTEL

But Crowds Cheer ex-King as Train Leaves for France.

The view looking south down Walbrook, London, after an air raid on 10-11 May 1941

draught beer from preference, although he did once produce a rare bottle of French wine when meeting with Churchill, while refusing – to his premier's annoyance – to say how he came by it.

The king's determination not to be seen as living in conditions unaffected by the privations of war arose not merely from a desire to share in some measure the lifestyle of the majority of his subjects, but from a sense of what was proper and decent. Foreign visitors were sometimes taken aback by royal living conditions. When Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Franklin D Roosevelt, stayed at a battle-scarred and shabby Buckingham Palace in the autumn of 1942, she wrote with some surprise in her diary, "I do not see how they keep the dampness out. The rooms were very cold except for the smaller sitting-room with an open fire. In every room there was a little electric heater." Mrs Roosevelt also noted that both the king and queen were suffering from colds and that the food included dehydrated, reconstituted eggs, various pies and jams made from root vegetables. Despite this basic and – for Mrs Roosevelt – surprising wartime fare, the food was served, in telling contrast, on silver and gold plates.

The media also made sure that the British people, amid the stresses and anxieties of the Second World War, did not forget that, as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, George VI had served on HMS Collingwood during the 1916 Battle of Jutland, the greatest and most far-reaching naval encounter of the First World War. In keeping with this tradition of royal involvement in the war effort, Princess Elizabeth joined the ATS – the Women's Army – towards the end of the war, becoming a driver of army trucks and knowledgeable on the subject of sparking plugs. There was also a certain symmetry in the bombing of Buckingham Palace at the same time as terraced houses in Stepney, Coventry and Plymouth were being pulverised.

In fact, the royal family's decision not to seek long-term and safe refuge out of London was typical of their determination to share their subjects' wartime ordeals, especially the relentless Luftwaffe bombing of London, other major British cities and national infrastructure. Although the two princesses slept at Windsor Castle for much of the war, the king and often the queen were determined to stay in London.

Twice, German bombs hit Buckingham Place during 1940. On the second occasion, two bombs landed in a quadrangle a mere 30 yards from where the king and queen were sitting talking to a member of palace staff. The king wrote in his diary afterwards, "We looked at each other & then we were out into the passage as fast as we could get there. The whole thing happened in a matter of seconds. We all wondered why we weren't dead." Queen Elizabeth's response to the attack was straightforward and honest: "I'm glad we've been bombed. It makes me feel we can look the East End in the face."

> **"Two bombs landed a mere 30 yards from where the king and queen were sitting talking to a member of palace staff"**

During the war, the royal couple made many visits to bombed towns and cities, to munitions factories and military installations, appearing before the public as often and as informally as they could. For example, on the day after the first bombs hit Buckingham Palace in September 1940, the king visited the already battered East End of London, where it was reported that he said, "It is wonderful – really wonderful – how brave everyone has been". Mrs Margaret Price was busy scrubbing her floor clear of falling debris that had dropped 90 yards from her house when the king walked by. "Lor," she said. "If it's not the king – and me so untidy." She jumped up and waved to him excitedly. The king smiled back. His Majesty had to climb over a heap of debris to inspect some wrecked houses. "Nice work, mate!" a workman called out to him. A woman broke through the crowds in one street to grasp the king's hand and say, "God bless and save you, Sir, and the queen and the princesses". George, obviously touched, shook the woman's hand and thanked her. In April 1941 the *Daily Mirror* carried a photograph of the King and Queen smiling amid a crowd of East Enders who were smiling joyfully back at them, with the caption, "Look at this photograph – the king, the queen, the cop, the kids, the crowd – and not a gloomy face among them."

Quite apart from such morale-boosting activities, George VI worked exceptionally hard in other ways during the war, making many visits to various units of the armed services, both at home and – when the conflict allowed – overseas. He insisted, whenever possible, on decorating all ranks of the fighting forces with the medals they had won in combat. He also tirelessly visited factories, workshops, coal mines, the docks and all the places where the war was being waged through the efforts of the civilian working population – a growing proportion of them women. He paid great attention to detail and was able frequently to astonish managers and workers alike with his knowledge of technical details. On

The King's royal visit of 1943

In the midst of the war, George VI made visits to both Malta and North Africa

Although the King had visited the BEF in France shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, his trip to North Africa in 1943, not long after the Battle of El Alamein had decisively turned the tide of war in that region against Rommel's Afrika Corps, was very different – a rare occasion for celebration. Mixing freely with units of the Eighth Army (known colloquially as the Desert Rats) and other Allied forces, the king was enthusiastically received, often pausing to hear the troops' accounts of their personal experiences.

Among the Allied leaders he met in North Africa were generals Alexander and Montgomery, and the leaders of the Free French Forces, generals De Gaulle and Giraud. Commonwealth forces made up an important part of the Eighth Army, chiefly units from India and South Africa. Despite the scorching desert heat and a punishing schedule of nearly 3,000 miles, he also managed to visit the heroic colony of Malta whose wartime resistance had earned it the award of the George Cross for valour. A photograph of the royal visit to Malta shows packed and wildly celebrating crowds lining the battle-scarred streets of the capital Valetta, as the king drives past in a black Austin car. Despite the long and hard road that lay ahead, it was at last possible to believe, especially with the United States and Soviet Russia as crucial parts of the Grand Alliance, that final victory was now all but certain.

King George with General Montgomery of the British Eighth Army in Tripoli, Libya

IT'S V-E DAY!
East German Units Yield
Remember Pearl Harbor!
Crowds celebrate the announcement of VE Day

A street party in London celebrating VE Day

As crowds gather outside Buckingham Palace on VE Day, George VI, his family and Winston Churchill step out onto the balcony to wave

one occasion, learning that there was a serious shortage of parts for anti-tank guns, he had a lathe installed at Windsor Castle and often worked on it at weekends. He also devised a new medal, the George Cross, to be awarded to civilians who had demonstrated gallantry in the war effort.

Wartime brought with it a veritable mass of government-imposed regulations affecting everyday life. As the historian A J P Taylor noted, "The king loved working to rule. The war brought many rules to which he could work." During the blackout he made a point of stepping outside whichever palace he happened to be in to check that no light was escaping from the windows – no small task with so many windows to observe. Although he always appeared in public wearing military uniform, in private he tended to make do with his pre-war stock of clothes, of which there were admittedly a good many. Nonetheless, when his shirts' collars and cuffs wore out, he asked his tailor to make new ones from the shirt-tails.

He also took the possibility of a German attempt to kidnap him seriously, and regularly took revolver practice in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. When being driven in his official car he always had a sten gun at his side and it was understood that he would shoot it out with any enemy assailant. The king also made it clear that, in the event of a German invasion, he would prefer to die fighting on his home ground.

The king also made a profound impact on the wider stage of the war. He proved a real asset to the British government in welcoming and making fruitful contact with the civilian and military leaders of the various nations and factions that were eventually to comprise the Grand Alliance that defeated the Axis powers. Throughout he demonstrated patient and often surprisingly well-informed diplomatic skills. His constitutional position as King-Emperor also made him a vital and inspirational figurehead of a complex and multi-ethnic global Empire.

"The King was keen to visit British and Commonwealth forces in the various theatres of war"

As someone who had seen active service during the First World War, the king was especially keen to visit British and Commonwealth forces in the various theatres of war. Such trips, for obvious reasons, could not be made during the heat of battle, but one of the most significant royal visits occurred in 1943 when George VI visited victorious Allied forces in North Africa, prudently making a new will before he departed. Since it also included a visit to Malta, which had recently been awarded the George Cross for its wartime heroics, the king travelled some 6,700 miles in all, enduring scorching heat and digestive upsets in the process. Typical of his reception by thousands of troops was an account of him "surrounded by hundreds of men, talking to them, asking them about their experiences. Then the men broke into song with 'For He's A Jolly Good Fellow'."

As the D-Day landings of summer 1944 approached, George VI found himself in a battle of wills with Churchill over the prime minister's determination to accompany the Allied invasion forces over the Channel. The king's wish also to be present was a complicating factor. In the end, George VI had to threaten personally to drive to the place of embarkation and thus prevent Churchill setting sail for Normandy.

For the last few months of the Second World War, the king had to get used to a new prime minister following Labour's landslide election victory in July 1945. As in 1940, George VI mourned the loss of a trusted colleague, writing, "It was great shock to me to have to lose Churchill". As before, however, the king was soon appreciating the personal qualities of his incoming premier – the modest, precise and shrewd Clement Attlee – despite some early awkward silences between the two essentially shy men.

Attlee greatly valued the king, saying with words that sum up his wartime contribution to final victory: "The longer I served him, the greater was my respect and admiration… It was his fate to reign in times of great tension. He could never look round and see a clear sky… He was a very hard worker. Few people realised how much time and care he gave to public affairs, and visitors from overseas were often astonished at his close familiarity with all kinds of questions. With this close study went a good judgement, and a sure instinct for what was really vital."

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A NEW ERA FOR THE WINDSORS

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♛ x Order of succession

⚭ Marriage

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SECURING THE SUCCESSION

As the Queen and Phince Philip's brood continued to grow, the future of the Windsor dynasty seemed safe and certain

2

ELIZABETH II

1926-NOW

♛ 1952-NOW

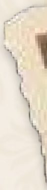
In 1952, Elizabeth became queen after her father's death. Her coronation was held on 2 June 1953 at Westminster Abbey.

⚭

PRINCE PHILIP

1921-2021

Having married in 1947, Philip sacrificed his titles, his career, and later even his surname for his wife and queen, Elizabeth.



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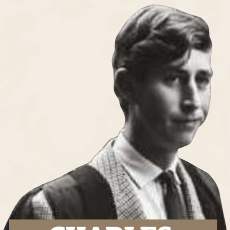

CHARLES, PRINCE OF WALES

1948-NOW

While Charles was a child, his parents spent much of their time abroad, so he grew close to his grandmother.

ANNE, PRINCESS ROYAL

1950-NOW

Boistrous, lively and filled with a love of sports, Princess Anne was the opposite of her sensitive and creative older brother.

ANDREW, DUKE OF YORK

1960-NOW

Born to Elizabeth when she was queen, Andrew was named after his grandfather, Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark.

EDWARD, EARL OF WESSEX

1964-NOW

The youngest of the children, Edward went to Gordonstoun, where he became head boy. After his A Levels, he went to Cambridge University.

GEORGE VI

1895-1952

♛ 1936-1952

ELIZABETH BOWES-LYON

1900-2002

The Queen pictured with her family at Windsor on her 39th birthday

The Queen Mother with Edward, David and Sarah

PRINCESS MARGARET

1930-2002

After her first love married someone else, Margaret married photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones in 1960.

ANTONY ARMSTRONG-JONES

1930-2017

Upon marrying Princess Margaret, Antony was given the title earl of Snowdon. They divorced in 1978.

Charles and Anne picnic with their grand-uncle and aunt, Louis and Edwina Mountbatten

DAVID ARMSTRONG-JONES

1961-NOW

Now known by his professional name of David Linley, he is the former chairman of Christie's and now makes furniture.

LADY SARAH ARMSTRONG-JONES

1964-NOW

Now an award-winning artist, Sarah excelled at art in her youth and is now the vice president of the Royal Ballet.

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THE PRINCE, THE NAZIS AND THE BROKEN HOME

Discover how the queen's "liege man of life and limb" overcame a tragic upbringing and emerged as a war hero and prince consort

Written by Tom Garner

The late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, is one of the most recognisable men in the world. As the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, he represented the British monarchy for more than seventy years and was the longest-serving consort of a reigning British monarch. Along with the queen, he did much to represent the royal family as an unchanging institution in a world that has changed almost beyond recognition since Elizabeth succeeded to the throne in 1952. However, on Philip's part this security was in deep contrast to his early life, which was formed by war, neglect, tragedy and endurance. In many ways his long, successful marriage and subsequent family compensated for the trials of his youth.

Philip was born on 10 June 1921 on the Greek island of Corfu at Mons Repos, the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg who already had four daughters: Cecilie, Sophie, Margarita and Theodora. Although typically seen as British in his later life, Philip was born as Prince of Greece and Denmark. This dual title was reflected in his name. He was christened 'Philippos' but he belonged to the Danish-German House of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg. To add to the confusion Philip was not a British subject at birth but did have family ties to England. His maternal grandfather, Prince Louis of Battenberg, was a naturalised British citizen who had adopted the surname of 'Mountbatten' during World War I. Philip was related to the British royal family through Queen Victoria, but he was also sixth in line to the Greek throne and his paternal uncle Constantine I was the ruling king. Nevertheless, his wider European connections would soon come in very handy for Philip as he was born during a turbulent time for Greece, and his stay in the country of his birth would not last long.

Philip's father was absent at his birth as he was away fighting in the Greek army during the Greco-Turkish War (1919-22). During this conflict, Andrew was the commander of the Greek Second Army Corps, but he proved to be an ineffectual general. At the pivotal Battle of Sakarya on 19 September 1921, he refused to obey the orders of his superior officer and tried to work to his own battle plan. Unfortunately this lack of co-ordination and communication contributed to a battlefield stalemate, and subsequently the war was lost. Andrew was relieved of his command and a year later he was arrested as part of the 11 September 1922 Revolution. This was a revolt of the Greek armed forces against the government, who they held responsible for the Turkish victory. It led to the downfall of the Greek monarchy and the abdication of King Constantine. As the brother of Constantine and a disgraced army commander, Andrew was in deep trouble. He was accused of treason and initially sentenced to death. General Pangalos, the Greek minister of war, asked him, "How many children have you?" When Andrew replied, Pangalos reportedly said, "Poor things, what a pity they will soon be orphans."

When Princess Alice heard of Andrew's plight, she travelled to Athens to plead for his life but she was not permitted to see her husband, so she turned to her British relatives for help. King George V, who was possibly haunted by not allowing his cousin Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and his family to seek asylum in Britain during World War I, urged for a British intervention to evacuate the family.

A Greek court banished Andrew from Greece for life and he was released in December 1922. He was lucky: six other senior members of the government were tried and executed. Soon afterwards a Royal Navy gunboat, HMS Calypso, evacuated the family from Corfu. Prince Philip, who was still a baby, was reputedly carried out to the ship in a makeshift cot made out of an orange box. For the infant, it was the start of decades of stateless wandering. From the moment Philip left Corfu on 3 December 1922 until he moved into Clarence House as Princess Elizabeth's husband in the late 1940s, he had no permanent home.

The family tried to settle in France at Saint-Cloud near Paris, where Andrew and Alice borrowed a house. From the start they lived in relative poverty. Alice was able to keep the family together on a limited allowance from her brother and Andrew was able to contribute a small legacy

> “He was a Greek prince living in France being educated in a British fashion”

that he had inherited, but they mostly relied on borrowed funds and hand-me-downs.

Relatives paid the children’s school fees, with Philip’s early education at the MacJannet American School in Paris. His life was confused - he was a Greek prince living in France but being educated in a British fashion. His stateless identity meant that he could formulate his own, which he later explained, “If anything I’ve thought of myself as Scandinavian, particularly Danish. We spoke English at home. The others learned Greek. I could understand a certain amount of it. But then the conversation would go into French. Then it went into German, because we had German cousins. If you couldn’t think of a word in one language, you tended to go off in another.”

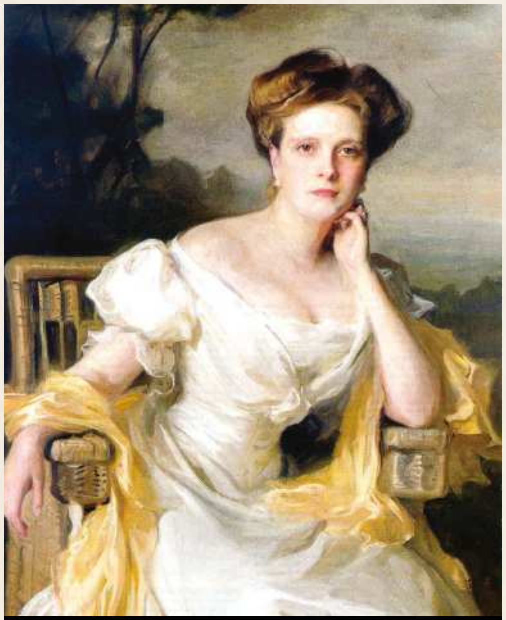
In 1928 Philip went to Britain for the first time to attend Cheam School. He appears to have been a somewhat boisterous child that needed some discipline. Alice wrote to the school in 1929 asking his tutors to form a Cub Scouts company for her son with a hint of anxiety: “The training would have such an excellent influence on him… I should be infinitely grateful if you could manage it as soon as possible.” By this stage Philip’s family life was already beginning to collapse. Alice, who had been born deaf, was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. There has been much speculation as to what caused this. It has been variously attributed to the ordeal of the family’s exile from Greece, the regular separations from her children as they attended different schools, a traumatic menopause, manic depression and even a possible religious crisis. It may have been one or a combination of these factors, but for whatever reason, Philip’s mother was placed in a Swiss sanatorium in 1931.

At around the same time, Philip’s sisters all married within nine months of each other between 1930-31 and moved away to settle in Germany. Prince Andrew, who had spent more and more time away from the Parisian family home, finally left altogether and moved to the south of France with a mistress. One relation said he was, “a deeply unhappy man.” Philip’s sister Sophie said, “We all sort of disappeared and the house in Saint-Cloud was closed down.” His parents had effectively relinquished responsibility for their son. This does not mean that they did not care for him - indeed, by all accounts he was much loved, but the circumstances of their own lives meant that they were unable to look after him properly. He was just ten years old and would

Philip started his education at the MacJannet American School in Saint-Cloud, France. He is pictured with his schoolmates and is the second boy on the left receive no word from his mother between 1932 and 1937. When Philip was asked about this time years later his reply was stoic and pragmatic: "It's simply what happened. The family broke up. My mother was ill, my sisters were married, my father was in the south of France. I just had to get on with it. You do. One does."

In the aftermath of this disintegration, the British part of Philip's family took a large part of responsibility for his care. His maternal grandmother, Princess Victoria, sent him to live with his uncle George, Marquis of Milford Haven. He was Philip's guardian for the next seven years and became a surrogate father to him. Philip would become close friends with George's son David, who later was best man at his wedding to Princess Elizabeth. The two boys attended Cheam School, where Philip excelled at sport. The Marquis would often come to watch him and his son play in school matches. The Milford Havens gave Philip a sense of stability that was lacking elsewhere but he remembered the upheaval as confusing. When he was later asked what language was spoken at home he replied, "What do you mean, at home?"

In 1933 Philip's second sister Theodora reappeared in his life and set him down the path towards a different education and introduced him to a significant mentor: Kurt Hahn. Theodora had married Berthold, Margrave of Baden, whose father had been Imperial Germany's last chancellor. Hahn had been the chancellor's personal secretary and knew the family, but he was also a committed educationalist. He was Jewish and a German patriot who had been involved in the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. He had



This portrait of Philip's mother, Princess Alice of Battenberg, was painted in 1907. Alice was deaf but could lip-read in several languages

The Greco-Turkish War (1919-22)

Prince Philip's early life was largely influenced by a disastrous conflict between Greece and Turkey in the aftermath of World War I

When the Ottoman Empire collapsed at the end of World War I, Greece moved troops into western Turkey to protect the large Greek population and to assert its historical claim over the region. The Greeks and Turks had long been traditional enemies and the Greek invasion was largely informed by a nationalist dream to create a greater Greece based on the Byzantine Empire, with Constantinople (now Istanbul) as its seat of government.

On 15 May 1919 Greek troops landed at Smyrna and occupied the city under the cover of the Allied navies. They already occupied Eastern Thrace and went on to create a Greek zone of occupation that covered most of western Asia Minor. At this stage King Constantine took command of the army. The western allies formally partitioned Turkey at the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, giving Greece Smyrna and Eastern Thrace as a reward for their contribution in World War I. The local Greek Christian population welcomed the invaders as liberators but the Muslim Turks saw them as occupiers. The Turkish revolutionary leader Mustafa Kemal rejected Sèvres and launched a national war against the Greeks. Kemal halted the Greek advance at the First and Second Battles of Inonu in early 1921 and the tide began to turn. The British refused to militarily assist the Greeks but the Turks received substantial help from the Soviet Union. The advancing Greeks met fierce resistance at the Battle of Sakarya, which was fought over 21 days between August and September 1921. Both sides became exhausted and contemplated withdrawal but the Greeks withdrew first. This near-stalemate definitively turned the course of the war and the Greeks advanced no further as they were hampered by a poor economy and a lack of strategic and operational planning.

An armistice was signed after a decisive Turkish victory at Dumlupinar in August 1922 and the Greeks left Turkey. The resulting Treaty of Lausanne saw an exchange of populations between the two countries. 500,000 Turks left Greece but almost all of the 1.5 million Greeks living in Turkish Anatolia and Thrace were expelled. Greece had huge problems trying to cater for the refugees in a ruined economy and became internationally isolated and internally divided. The monarchy, which was largely blamed for the defeat, was abolished and the war later became known as the Asia Minor Catastrophe.

A family divided

Find out what became of Prince Philip's broken family

Theodora
1906-1969
Second-born to Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg, Theodora married Berthold, Margrave of Baden. She died in 1969, outliving her husband, but outlived by her mother.

Cecilie
1911-1937
Tragically dying in a plane crash at the age of 26, Cecilie married Georg Donatus. Cecilie died with her husband, two sons and unborn baby, but left behind a daughter, Joanna. Two years later, Joanna died of meningitis.

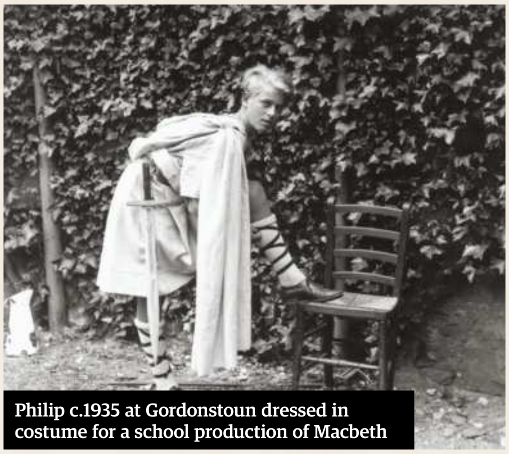
Sophie
1914-2001
Sophie was first to marry. In 1930 she wed Prince Christoph of Hesse. He died 13 years later. She later married Prince George William of Hanover. Sophie was godmother to Prince Edward, Philip's fourth child.

Margarita
1905-1981
The eldest sister of the family, Margarita married Prince Gottfried of Hohenlohe-Langenburg. They had six children together. Dying at the age of 76, she outlived her husband by 21 years.

Princess Alice
1885-1969
Philip's mother, Princess Alice of Battenberg, was committed to several sanitariums in the 1920s and 1930s. Upon her release, she found solace in religion and became a nun. She died in 1969 at Buckingham Palace.

Prince Andrew
1882-1944
Having left his family, Prince Andrew took up residence with his mistress on a yacht in the French Riviera. At the funeral of Cecilie in 1937, he met his wife for the first time in six years. In 1944 he died of heart failure in Monte Carlo.

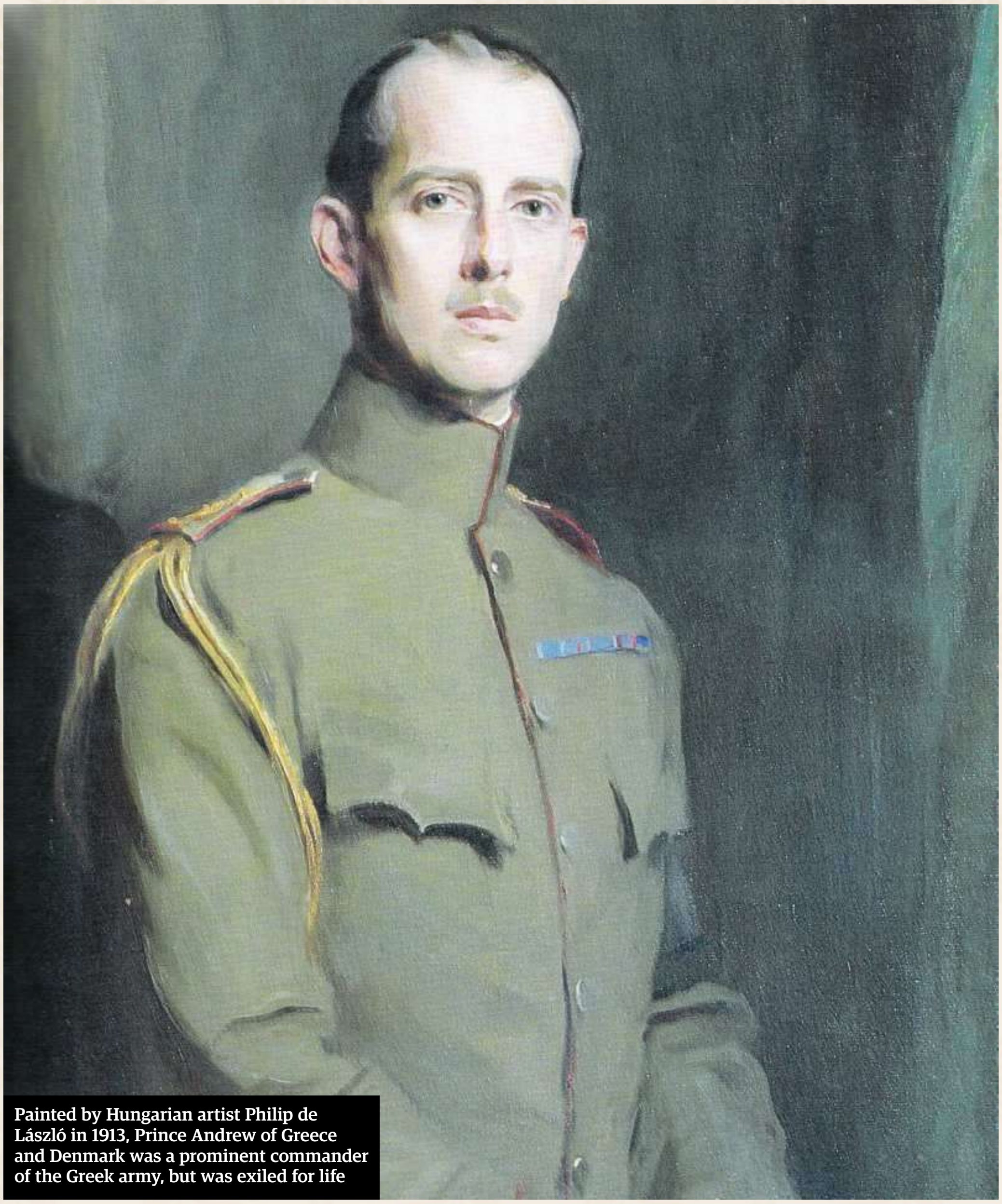
been so upset at the Allied treatment of post-war Germany that he helped to coin the term, 'Kriegsschuldluge' ('The lie of war guilt'). Ironically, the deeply anti-Semitic Nazi Party would use this message as an explosive slogan for revenge and rearmament, which was not Hahn's intention.



Philip c.1935 at Gordonstoun dressed in costume for a school production of Macbeth

In 1920, he and the Baden family founded a school at Schloss Salem in Baden-Württemberg and it was here that Theodora sent Philip in autumn 1933. It was an anxious time to move to Germany as Adolf Hitler had recently come to power. He had only been in office for a few months, but it was enough to create political tensions, with Hahn himself being arrested for protesting against the Nazis. For Philip the move was bad timing and his brother-in-law admitted, "He wasn't really integrated into the community. He had little opportunity to make real friends, and he spoke very little German. He was really very isolated." In a sinister twist, the Nazis promoted the Hitler Youth Movement in the school, where participants would use the Nazi salute. Philip apparently laughed at this, as the salute was the same gesture that the boys at Schloss Salem used to indicate that they wanted to go to the toilet.

By 1934 Philip was sent back to Britain and was sent to a new school in Scotland that had been established by the now exiled Hahn: Gordonstoun. The teaching methods developed by Hahn were radical and innovative. He believed that adolescents should be respected but were also susceptible to the corruptions of society. Hahn postulated that there were was a six-fold decay of civilisation, which he called 'The Six Declines of Modern Youth'. They were the decline of: fitness, initiative and enterprise, memory and imagination, skill and care, self-discipline, and compassion. Gordonstoun pupils were taught to counter these declines. For instance, they rose at 7am each day, donned shorts and ran barefoot for 300 yards to the washroom where they showered in cold water both in winter and summer. Philip was hardy, energetic and competitive, and flourished under this apparently tough regime. He excelled at hockey and sailing and in his last year became Head Boy. Hahn's philosophy had a great impact on Philip and many years later he called on him to help found the Duke of Edinburgh's Award


Painted by Hungarian artist Philip de László in 1913, Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark was a prominent commander of the Greek army, but was exiled for life

Philip's elder sister Cecilie was a member of the Nazi party

Philip's marriage to Princess Elizabeth in November 1947 gave him a domestic stability that he had never known

programme. Today the award scheme is active in more than 130 countries and recognises young people's achievements in self-improvement based on Hahn's Six Declines of Modern Youth. Such was Hahn's influence that when he died in 1974 Philip read the story of the Good Samaritan at his memorial service.

Despite Philip's achievements at Gordonstoun, he could not escape the fact that he was still very isolated. In the five years that he attended the school neither George Milford Haven nor Philip's other British guardian Lord Louis Mountbatten visited him. This is an extraordinary lapse for men who were technically responsible for him. During term-time there were long discussions about where Philip would go for his holidays. Towards the end of his time at Gordonstoun Philip was hit by a family tragedy. On 19 November 1937 his pregnant sister Cecilie was killed in plane crash in Belgium, along with her husband, two children and unborn child. She had been flying to England to attend a wedding. Hahn conveyed the news to Philip, but the 16-year-old did not break down, which led his headmaster to recall, "His sorrow was that of a man." Nor did his fellow pupils remember Philip showing any signs of grief, with one remembering, "I suppose he just buried his feelings." Philip travelled alone to attend the funerals in Germany. It was a tragically strange occasion. Nazi officials surrounded the funeral parties but it was also the first time that Philip's parents had seen each other and their surviving children for years. They were the worst circumstances for a reunion, but Philip returned to Britain to fend for himself again.

> "He was just ten years old and would receive no word from his mother"

The next year, 1938, brought new purpose to Philip's life in more ways than one. Under the advice of his father and Lord Mountbatten, Philip decided to join the Royal Navy and enrolled at the Britannia Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. He excelled at naval training and almost passed with top marks. His contemporary, Terence Lewin, who later became First Sea Lord said, "Prince Philip was a highly talented seaman. No doubt about it. If he hadn't become what he did, he would have been First Sea Lord and not me." This was an intense time to join the Navy as Britain was on

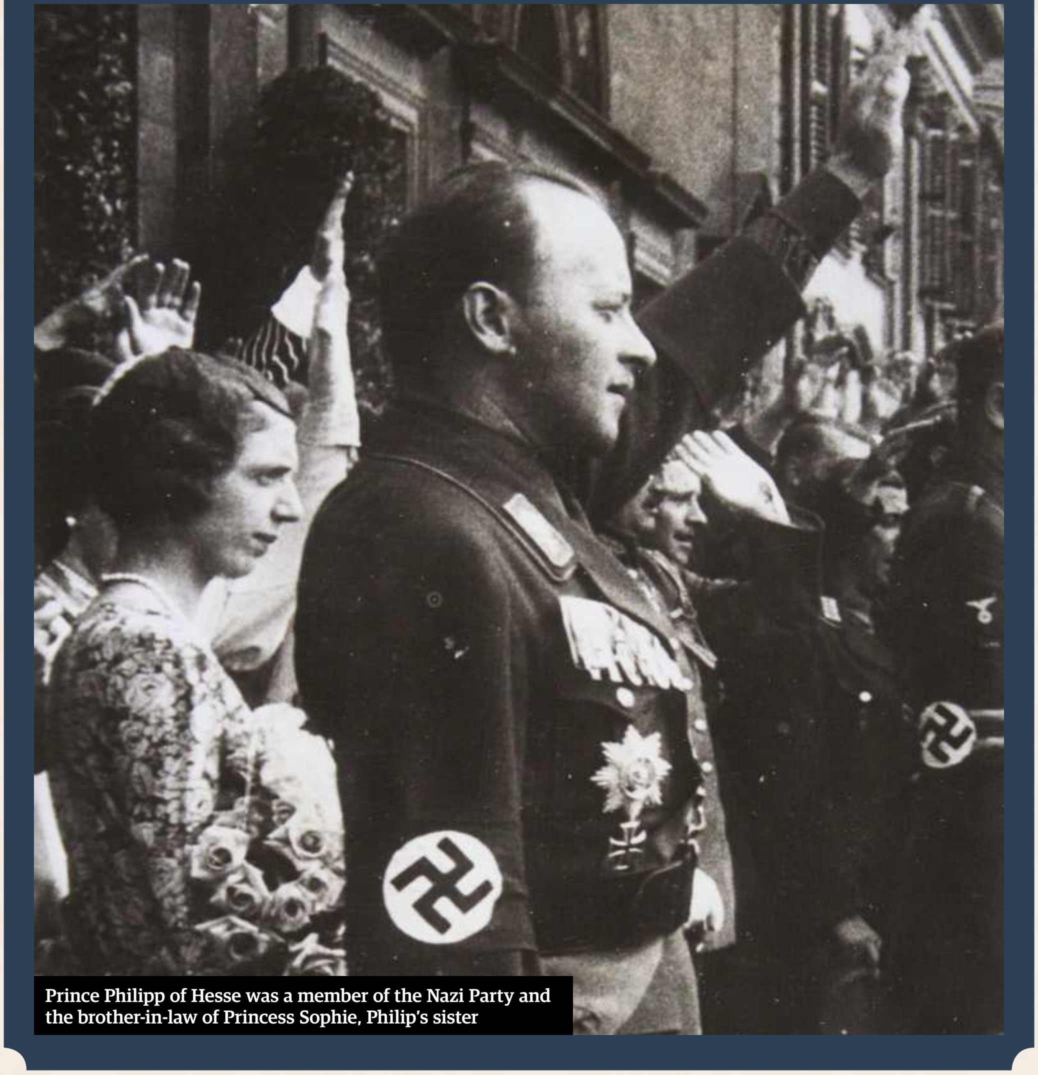
The sisters who married Nazis

Some of Philip's siblings had sinister connections to the Third Reich

One sign of Philip's highly divided family was that some of his sisters had connections to the Nazi Party. All four had married into the German nobility: Margarita had married Gottfried, Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg; Theodora married Berthold, Margrave of Baden; Cecilie married Georg Donatus, Grand Duke of Hesse and Sophie married Prince Christoph of Hesse. It was traditional for European royal families to marry into foreign noble houses, but in the context of the 1930s, it was an out-of-date practice, particularly in the wake of World War I. Many surviving nobles tried to protect their positions by aligning with the radical social changes that were occurring throughout Europe. In the case of Germany, some sought to curry favour with the Nazis.

Sophie's husband Prince Christoph and his brother Philipp were great-grandsons of Queen Victoria and enthusiastic Nazis. Christoph was a prominent SS colonel who was attached to Himmler's personal staff and was the head of the intelligence service, the 'Forschungsamt', which spied on Nazi opponents under the command of Hermann Goering. Philipp had joined the Nazis in 1930 and was their governor in Hesse in 1933, and later served as a liaison between Hitler and Mussolini. Sophie and Christoph even named their eldest son Karl Adolf in Hitler's honour and Sophie said that Hitler was a "charming and seemingly modest man."

On 1 May 1937 Cecilie and her husband Georg, Duke of Hesse, also joined the Nazi Party, but they were killed in a plane crash. Their funerals became a Nazi pageant. Prince Philip walked alongside Prince Christoph who wore his SS uniform, and Philipp wore the brown shirt of the SA. There were also uniformed soldiers, and many onlookers gave the Hitler salute. Goering attended and there were messages of condolences from Hitler and Goebbels. When Prince Philip got married ten years later the British royal family excluded his surviving sisters and their husbands from attending the wedding, largely out of embarrassment and taking into consideration the anti-German feeling in Britain when the horrors of the Nazi regime had been realised.



Prince Philipp of Hesse was a member of the Nazi Party and the brother-in-law of Princess Sophie, Philip's sister

During World War II, Philip was first officer on board HMS Whelp

the brink of war with Germany, but Philip's time at Dartmouth coincided with the first meeting of his future wife. In July 1939, Philip was put in charge of entertaining his distant cousins, 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth and her younger sister Margaret when they visited the college. They had met in 1934 and in 1937 at George VI's coronation but on this occasion Elizabeth fell for Philip. Over the next few years they would write letters to each other, but for the moment there were other priorities. There was a war to be fought.

Philip's war service began when he was posted to HMS Ramillies in Ceylon in January 1940. In the war's early days, he was posted far from action as Greece was not at war, and as a Greek prince the British did not want him to be killed on a Royal Navy ship. However, this changed when Italy invaded Greece and Philip became an active participant. At the Battle of Cape Matapan off the Greek coast in March 1941, Philip served as a midshipman on HMS Valiant where he was in charge of operating the ship's searchlight to pick out ships during the night. He recalled, "I reported that I had a target in sight and was ordered to 'open shutter'. The beam lit up a stationary cruiser and at this point all hell broke loose, as all our eight 15-inch guns, plus those of the flagship, plus HMS Barham's, started firing at the stationary cruiser, which disappeared in an explosion and

Philip works in his office upon returning from service

a cloud of smoke. I was then ordered to 'train left' and lit up another Italian cruiser, which was given the same treatment". The ships identified by Philip were two of five Italian warships that were sunk by the British with the loss of 2,300 sailors. It was Italy's greatest naval defeat and Philip was mentioned in dispatches for his courage and awarded the Greek Cross of Valour.

The next year, at the age of 21, Philip was promoted to become one of the youngest first lieutenants in the Navy and in July 1943 he was once again in action, this time aboard HMS Wallace taking part in the Allied invasion of Sicily. During a night attack, Wallace came under bombardment from a German plane. One yeoman sailor aboard the ship, Harry Hargreaves, recalled in a 2003 interview, "It was obvious that we were a target and they would not stop until we had suffered a fatal hit. It was like being blindfolded and trying to evade an enemy whose only problem was getting his aim right. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that a direct hit was inevitable." During a lull in the attack Philip acted quickly. "The first lieutenant (Philip) went into hurried conversation with the captain, and the next thing a wooden raft was being put together on deck." This raft was attached with smoke floats that created the illusion of debris ablaze on the water. The German plane was fooled into attacking the raft and the ship slipped away under the cover of darkness. Hargreaves praised Philip's initiative, "It had been marvellously quick thinking. Prince Philip saved our lives that night. I suppose there would have been a few survivors, but certainly the ship would have been sunk. He was always very courageous and resourceful." Philip himself later talked about his plan in a BBC interview, describing it as "a frightfully good wheeze… we got away with it." Despite his nonchalance, even he conceded, "It was a very unpleasant sensation."

Philip ended his war aboard HMS Whelp, which was one of the ships that took part in the formal surrender of Japanese forces on 2 September 1945. He recalled, "Being in Tokyo Bay with the surrender ceremony taking place in the battle ship, which was what, 200 yards away and you could see what was going on with a pair of binoculars, it was a great relief". After the surrender his ship took on former prisoners of war and he was shocked by their appearance. "These people were naval people. They were emaciated… tears pouring down their cheeks, they just drank their tea, they couldn't really speak. It was a most extraordinary sensation."

Now that the war was over he expected to continue in his naval career, but fate had determined a different future for him…

> "During term-time there were long discussions about where Philip would go for his holidays"

The Battle of Cape Matapan, during which Philip was in charge of operating the ship's searchlight

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AN EVERLASTING LOVE

As Britain recovered from the horrors of World War II, it basked in the romantic love story of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip

Written by Jessica Leggett

Over the last seven decades, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip have been the foundation of the British monarchy. The story of their relationship, from a young romance to their marriage, endeared them to the public at a time when the majority of royals married for duty rather than for love. Their wedding came at a time when the people of Britain, weary from the war, craved a distraction, becoming one of the most celebrated events of the 20th century.

Princess Elizabeth was just eight years old when she first set eyes on her third cousin, Prince Philip, at the wedding of Princess Marina of Greece and Denmark to Prince George, Duke of Kent, in 1934. Five years later they would meet again, at the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth in July 1939. This time Elizabeth, now 13 years old, fell head over heels in love for Philip, who had turned into a handsome 18-year-old man.

The pair managed to spend a lot of time together that day as Philip's uncle, Lord Louis Mountbatten, had arranged for his nephew to chaperone both the princess and her sister, Princess Margaret. After connecting at the College, Elizabeth and Philip agreed to exchange letters while they were apart and soon enough, the princess started to keep a framed photo of her beloved by her bed.

With the outbreak of World War II just months later, Elizabeth and Philip found themselves separated over the next six years, just like millions of other couples across the country. While Philip served in the British Royal Navy, the princess trained as a driver and mechanic, working for the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1945. Elizabeth and Philip remained in contact during such harrowing times, with the latter even making a brief visit to Windsor to watch the princess perform in a pantomime.

When the war finally ended in 1945, there was a sigh of relief across Great Britain. Elizabeth and Philip were still in love and it became obvious to onlookers that their romance was indeed serious. Elizabeth's father, King George VI, invited Philip to Balmoral in 1946. It was during this visit that the prince took the plunge and asked Elizabeth to marry him, after seeking permission from her father. George consented, but on the condition that the engagement remain a secret until Elizabeth's 21st birthday in April 1947.

However, this was not just about giving Elizabeth time to consider her decision. Her father, along with the rest of the royal family, were concerned that Philip was not a suitable choice for the husband of the future queen. There were no advantages to be made from their marriage - although Philip was a prince, he was practically penniless, and his family had been exiled from Greece after the abdication of his uncle, King Constantine I. In addition to this, Elizabeth's family were well aware of the chaotic situation of Philip's parents. While Elizabeth had a close and loving upbringing, Philip was left alone to be raised in boarding schools. His mother, Princess Alice of Battenberg, was suffering with mental illness while his philandering father abandoned the family. With parents such as these, there were grave doubts that Philip would not remain faithful to Elizabeth for long.

There were also concerns about Philip's connection to the Nazis in the wake of World War II. All four of his older sisters had married Nazis and when one of them, Cecile, died in a plane crash in 1937, a young Philip was pictured at her funeral surrounded by the Nazis.

Of course, it was also impossible to forget the domineering presence of Philip's uncle and mentor, Lord Mountbatten. Ambitious and determined, it was no secret that Mountbatten was actively campaigning in favour of the relationship - to the point where Philip apparently admitted that his uncle was placing a lot of pressure on him to ask for Elizabeth's hand in marriage.

It is said that Elizabeth's mother, Queen Elizabeth, referred to her future son-in-law as "the Hun" and that even the prime minister, Winston Churchill, was suspicious of the prince. Though Elizabeth was excited about her future with Philip, her family secretly hoped that within a year she would have changed her mind. Elizabeth may have been a naturally shy woman, but her family

The young couple looked very much in love on their wedding day

Elizabeth walking up the aisle at Westminster Abbey with her father

wholly underestimated her determination to marry Philip. Adamant that she would only marry him, King George and Queen Elizabeth were eventually forced to accept their relationship.

In the lead up to the announcement, Prince Philip renounced his Greek and Danish titles and became a naturalised British citizen, subsequently adopting the last name 'Mountbatten', which was from his mother's British family. Philip also converted to Anglicanism in preparation for his marriage to the future Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

On the 9 July 1947, less than three months after Elizabeth's 21st birthday, the royal engagement was announced to the world. While the couple basked in the happiness, it seemed that it was not only Elizabeth's families that had reservations about the match. A newspaper poll that was held soon after the announcement indicated that 40% of the public were against the marriage – unsurprising, as Philip was considered too 'German' following the conclusion of the war.

> "Wedding fever was running high throughout the nation"

Yet when it became clear that the couple were marrying for love rather than duty, those who initially opposed the marriage soon warmed up to it. After all, a glamorous royal wedding was a welcome distraction for many in Great Britain and a great way to boost morale in the country.

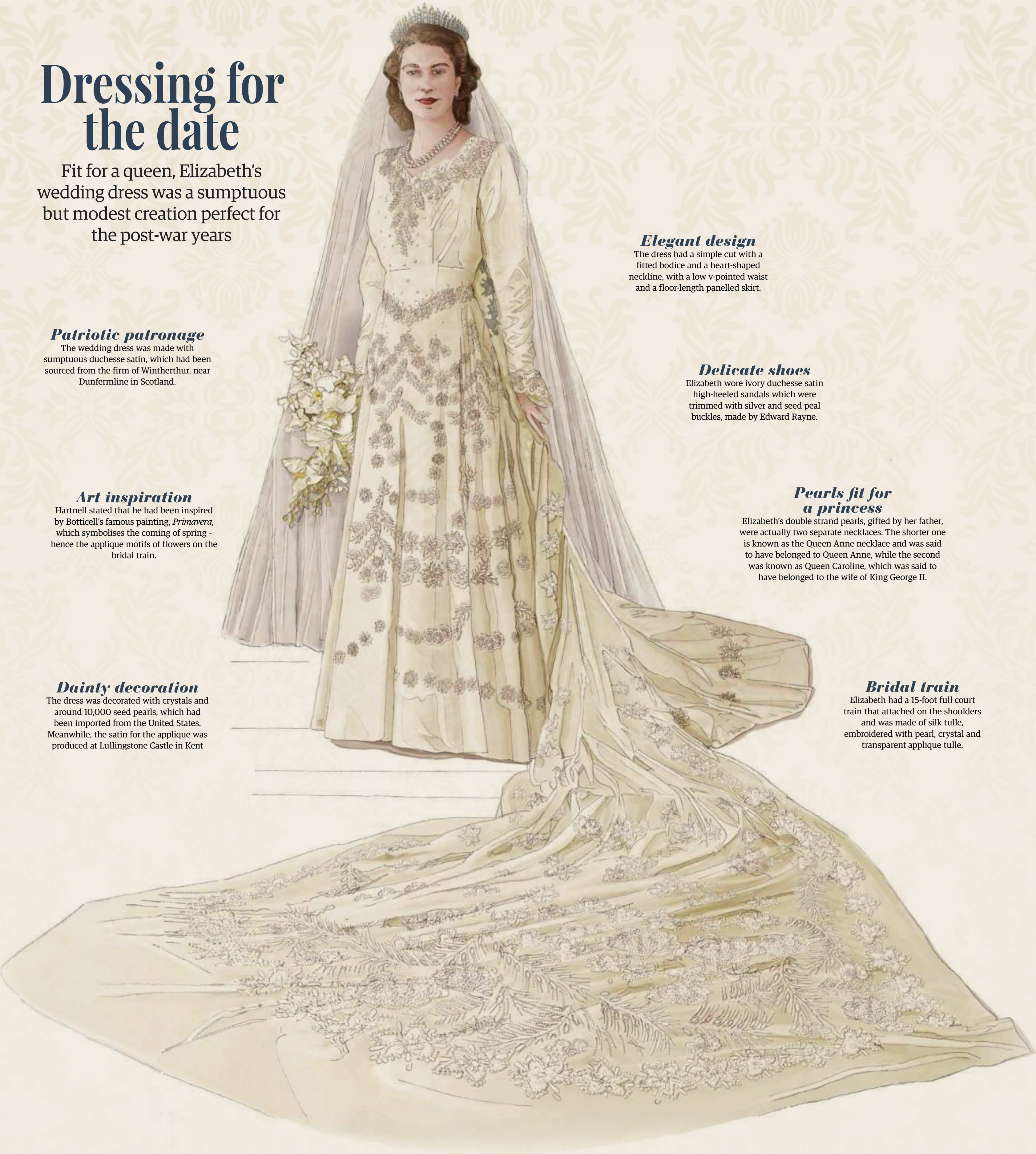
With the wedding date set for the 20 November and with just four months to plan the event, preparations quickly got under way. It wasn't until mid-August that the design for Elizabeth's wedding dress, by Sir Norman Hartnell, was approved, giving the renowned designer less than three months to create it.

Wedding fever was running high throughout the nation (and worldwide), but with post-war austerity still in place, Elizabeth had to save up her clothing ration coupons in order to pay for the material of her dress – in total it took 3,000 coupons. To help her, hundreds of brides-to-be sent their own coupons to the princess so that she could use them. Although this was a very endearing gesture, the coupons all had to be returned to their owners as it would have been illegal for Elizabeth to use them because they belonged to others.

The government did provide Elizabeth with 200 extra coupons to pay for her wedding dress while Philip, never one for extravagance and spending, planned to wear his naval uniform for the big day. The couple would marry at Westminster Abbey, where King George and Queen Elizabeth had married 24 years earlier, making the princess the

Dressing for the date

Fit for a queen, Elizabeth's wedding dress was a sumptuous but modest creation perfect for the post-war years



Patriotic patronage

The wedding dress was made with sumptuous duchesse satin, which had been sourced from the firm of Wintherthur, near Dunfermline in Scotland.

Art inspiration

Hartnell stated that he had been inspired by Botticell's famous painting, *Primavera*, which symbolises the coming of spring – hence the applique motifs of flowers on the bridal train.

Dainty decoration

The dress was decorated with crystals and around 10,000 seed pearls, which had been imported from the United States. Meanwhile, the satin for the applique was produced at Lullingstone Castle in Kent

Elegant design

The dress had a simple cut with a fitted bodice and a heart-shaped neckline, with a low v-pointed waist and a floor-length panelled skirt.

Delicate shoes

Elizabeth wore ivory duchesse satin high-heeled sandals which were trimmed with silver and seed peal buckles, made by Edward Rayne.

Pearls fit for a princess

Elizabeth's double strand pearls, gifted by her father, were actually two separate necklaces. The shorter one is known as the Queen Anne necklace and was said to have belonged to Queen Anne, while the second was known as Queen Caroline, which was said to have belonged to the wife of King George II.

Bridal train

Elizabeth had a 15-foot full court train that attached on the shoulders and was made of silk tulle, embroidered with pearl, crystal and transparent applique tulle.

The newlyweds waved to the crowds outside Buckingham Palace

10th member of the royal family to be wed in the spectacular venue.

It was decided that the princess would have eight bridesmaids including her sister HRH Princess Margaret, her cousin HRH Princess Alexandra of Kent, Lady Caroline Montagu-Douglas-Scott, Lady Mary Cambridge, The Hon. Pamela Mountbatten, The Hon, Margaret Elphinstone, Lady Elizabeth Lambart and Diana Bowes-Lyon.

As for Philip's best man, he chose David Mountbatten, the Marquess of Milford Haven, while Prince William of Gloucester and Prince Michael of Kent would serve as page boys. In total, 2,000 guests were to be invited to the wedding ceremony, many of whom were heads of state, such as Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and the king of Iraq. Notably absent would be Philip's sisters as well as Elizabeth's uncle, the Duke of Windsor, who had caused a constitutional crisis just a decade earlier by abdicating the throne.

The king and queen held a grand ball at Buckingham Palace just two days before the wedding to celebrate their daughter's upcoming marriage. The usually reserved King George even lead a conga line through all of the state rooms in the palace. On the morning of the wedding, Prince Philip was made Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth and Baron Greenwich. The day before, King George had bestowed the title of 'His Royal Highness' on Philip, which meant that for a few hours, the prince had the unusual title of His Royal Highness Sir Philip Mountbatten.

Philip had spent the night before his wedding at Kensington Palace, and with hordes of photographers outside in the bitter cold waiting for him to emerge, Prince Philip arranged tea and coffee for them. Meanwhile, Elizabeth was getting ready at Buckingham Palace, even applying her own makeup for the wedding.

Just like any wedding day, not everything went as smoothly as the princess would have liked. Her delicate bridal bouquet, delivered that morning and made of white orchids and a sprig of myrtle, had gone missing. The myrtle had come from Osborne House, where Queen Victoria had planted a cutting that had been given to her by Prince Albert's grandmother. As panic set in, it turned out that a footman had placed the bride's bouquet in a cool room to keep it fresh, preventing the flowers from wilting.

"Prince Philip was made Duke of Edinburgh"

The bouquet was not the only unfortunate mishap of the morning. Elizabeth's mother had lent her the Queen Mary Fringe Tiara to be her something borrowed on her special day. As it was being placed on her head, disaster struck as the diamond tiara suddenly snapped. Standing by in case of an emergency was the court jeweller, who was rushed to his workroom by a police escort. Elizabeth waited anxiously and her mother quickly reassured her that the tiara would be fixed in time – and it was.

To top off the issues for the bride-to-be, the necklace that she supposed to wear, a double strand of pearls gifted to her by her parents, had been put on display at St James's Palace. To get them in time, Elizabeth's private secretary raced to the palace, borrowing the car of King Haakon VII of Norway.

Despite the bumps along the way, the princess and the prince were finally ready for their

The engagment ring

Philip went to great lengths to design a ring fit for a queen

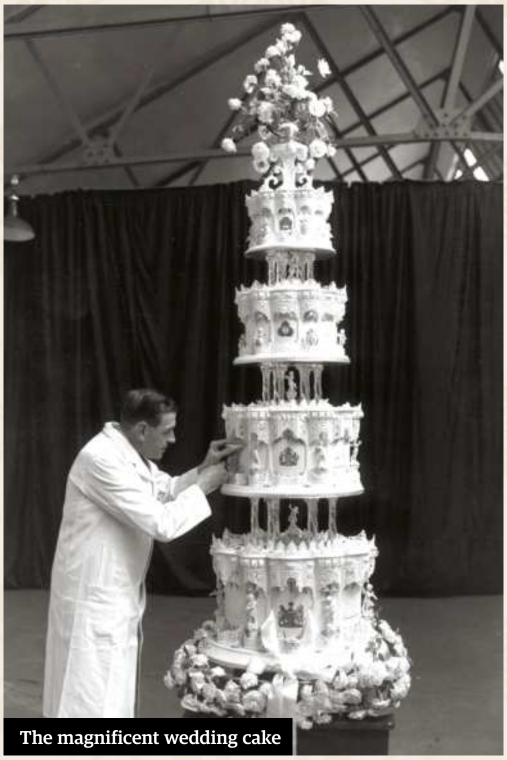
It was no secret that Philip was practically penniless, which was a huge obstacle when it came to creating the engagement ring of Elizabeth's dreams. Aware that her son wanted to propose to his beloved, Princess Alice gave him her tiara, which had been a gift from Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandra. It was a sweet gesture, as Alice sacrificed her tiara to help Philip propose to the princess.

With the help of London-based jewellers Philip Antrobus Ltd, Philip used the diamonds from his mother's tiara to create a platinum and diamond engagement ring. The three-carat diamond solitaire is flanked by ten small diamonds, all set in platinum. While making her engagement ring, Philip also used other diamonds to make Elizabeth a beautiful bracelet as a wedding gift. Apparently, the prince wanted to design a ring that Elizabeth could wear with every outfit for every occasion, which was not a usual thing to consider at the time.

However, this was not the only wedding gift that Philip gave to Elizabeth. It is said that on the morning of the wedding, Philip decided to permanently quit smoking. His decision behind this was reportedly out of respect for his soon-to-be wife, who disliked smoking and was concerned about her father's habit, particularly as his health was steadily declining.

Elizabeth is always pictured wearing her beautiful engagement ring

The beaming bride after her fairytale wedding



The magnificent wedding cake

wedding, which was due to start at 11:30am. The royal parties arrived at the abbey in large carriage processions, past the thousands of onlookers who had lined the streets to get a glimpse of the royal bride. Queen Elizabeth and Princess Margaret were the first to arrive, followed by Dowager Queen Mary.

Prince Philip left Kensington Palace accompanied by his best man and entered the abbey through a door near Poet's Corner. Meanwhile, Elizabeth made her way inside the decadent Irish State Coach, with her father by her side, escorted by the Household Cavalry. As the coach approached the abbey, the bells of St. Margaret's Church rang out to announce the princess's arrival. Outside, the princess was joined by her large bridal party. As the radiant bride made her way inside Westminster Abbey, she must have been acutely aware that the entire ceremony was being recorded and broadcast by BBC radio to 200 million people. Waiting at the High Altar was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, who officiated the wedding.

At the High Altar there were large vases filled with white lilies, roses, pink carnations, camellia foliage, variegated ivy and chrysanthemums. Clement Attlee, the prime minister at the time, and other politicians were sat in the choir stalls with King George VI and Queen Elizabeth sat in the south side of the Sanctuary.

The organist and master of the choristers at the abbey, William Neil McKie, was the director for the music. The ceremony began with a fanfare specifically composed for the wedding by Arnold Bax, while McKie also composed a motet for the wedding, "We wait for thy loving kindness, O God." Sir Edward Cuthbert Bairstow sung a rendition of Psalm 67 and in total, there were 91 singers at the wedding with the combined choirs of the abbey, the Chapel Royal and St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle.

The couple exchanged their vows. Elizabeth's wedding ring was made from a nugget of Welsh gold, which came from the Clogau St David's mine, near Dolgellau. The gold had been given as a gift to Queen Elizabeth to make her wedding ring and eventually, the wedding rings of Princess Margaret, Princess Anne and Princess Diana were all made with it.

After the couple finished their vows, they moved into St. Edward's Chapel behind the altar in order to sign their marriage register, accompanied by immediate members of their family. Once the register had been signed, the couple walked out of the Abbey to Felix Mendelssohn's classic *Wedding March*.

Following the wedding ceremony, the newlyweds left Westminster Abbey to return to Buckingham Palace. The wedding breakfast was held in the Ball-Supper Room at lunchtime, with a menu of "filet de sole Mountbatten, perdreau en casserole, and bombe glacée Princess Elizabeth". Princess Elizabeth, taking into account the post-war rationing of food, only had 150 guests attending the wedding breakfast.

While the guests tucked into their food, they enjoyed the music provided by the string band of the Grenadier Guards. The delicate wedding favours were made from individual posies of myrtle and white heather, from the royal estate of Balmoral in Scotland.

The stunning wedding cake was made by McVitie and Price. It was nine feet tall, separated into four tiers, made from ingredients that had been sent from all over the world. Even the sugar that was used had been provided by the Girl Guides in Australia and as the result the cake was nicknamed 'The 10,000 Mile Cake'. The cake was decorated with the arms of the bride and groom's families, monograms of the bride and groom, sugar-iced figures of their favourite activities and also decorations of regimental and naval badges. Elizabeth and Philip cut the cake with the sword that had been gifted to the groom by his new father-in-law.

Although this was the official wedding cake, the couple had received 11 wedding cakes in total. In fact, they received over 2,500 gifts and 10,000 telegrams of congratulations from well-wishers – Mahatma Gandhi had even sent a piece of cotton lace that he spun himself, embroidered with the words 'Jai Hind' or 'Victory for India' in English.

To greet those who had gathered on the Mall, Elizabeth and Philip made their way onto the balcony and waved to the adoring crowds. The next day, Elizabeth's wedding bouquet was sent back to Westminster Abbey to be laid on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, a royal tradition set by her mother.

The wedding fever that had consumed Britain did not end once the special day was over. Elizabeth's dress was exhibited at St. James's Palace before embarking on a tour across the country, giving the public an opportunity to view it up close. The palace also exhibited all of the gifts that the couple had received for the public to enjoy, while cinemas held screenings of the wedding ceremony.

A couple of years into their marriage, Philip relinquished his beloved and promising naval career to support his wife, as she assumed more responsibility in the wake of her father's declining health, proving to all that he would be a reliable consort to Elizabeth.

In 2007, Elizabeth became the first British monarch to celebrate a diamond wedding anniversary and in 2017, the royal couple reached their platinum anniversary. When Philip died on 9 April 2021, 73 years after their magical wedding day that lifted the spirit of the nation, both he and Elizabeth proved that love can, indeed, last a lifetime.

Crowds of people gathered outside of Buckingham Palace to see the bride and groom

© Getty

THE PRINCE OF HOPE

The birth of Prince Charles brought huge joy to his family, but his early years would see several separations from his mother and father

Written by June Woolerton

If the marriage of the heir to the throne, Princess Elizabeth, to Prince Philip in 1947 had been billed as a celebration for Britain after years of wartime austerity, then the arrival of the couple's first child just under 12 months later was an added moment of sparkle for a country still dealing with the aftermath of war. However, the birth of this prince was also a pivotal moment for his family. A decade after the Abdication Crisis had called the very future of the monarchy into question, the House of Windsor was given a renewed strength by his birth, which secured the succession into the 21st century.

The royal wedding of 1947 had been a turning point for the royal family, and in the months that followed Elizabeth and Philip became the most celebrated members of the House of Windsor. An official trip to Paris in 1948 provided more glamour, but it also led to rumours that the princess was pregnant. She appeared pale and tired at an event and her husband whisked her out of one room so that she could rest. In June, Buckingham Palace announced that the heir to the throne wouldn't be carrying out any more engagements from the end of that month – the rather discreet way that royal pregnancies were confirmed in the post-war years.

Elizabeth and Philip prepared for the arrival of their baby at Buckingham Palace, where they had been living for most of 1948. The young couple intended to move into Clarence House, but it was still undergoing major repairs while their planned country home, Sunninghill Park, had been hit by fire. So the expectant parents passed the final months of Elizabeth's pregnancy with King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, who helped oversee the plans for the birth of their first grandchild.

They also had to negotiate the way the new arrival would be known. Although Elizabeth was heir to the throne, her baby would take its title from its father, as only male-line grandchildren of a sovereign were automatically given royal status. Just days before the baby was born, King George VI ensured that his first grandchild would be royal from the moment of birth by issuing new Letters Patent, which confirmed the baby would hold the rank of HRH and the title of prince or princess.

A delivery room was set up in the Belgian Suite of Buckingham Palace. Named in honour of Queen Victoria's influential uncle, King Leopold of the Belgians, its three rooms were decorated with art by Canaletto and Gainsborough and among the pictures hanging on its walls were portraits of King George III and Queen Charlotte. The princess would end up spending several days there. Her labour began in the afternoon of Saturday 13 November 1948, but proved long and difficult.

Prince Philip, like many expectant fathers of the time, was kept outside the delivery suite, and as the labour progressed into a second day, he took his anxiety out on the squash court. It was there that he heard news of the birth, which cemented the House of Windsor's hold on the throne.

The longed-for baby was born on 14 November 1948, after a 30-hour labour that ended with a Caesarean section, which had been carried out under general anaesthetic. However, the difficult delivery had been made easier by the decision to stop the practice that required the home secretary to be present to ensure the baby wasn't switched for another. Elizabeth gave birth safely and privately to her son at 9.14pm.

The baby was eventually delivered in the Buhl Room of Buckingham Palace, weighing 7lb 6oz and in perfect health. Prince Philip immediately opened champagne to start the toasts and was on hand with flowers for his wife when she eventually came round from her sedation.

The large crowd that had gathered outside for news of the royal birth had to wait a little longer to start their celebrations. The official announcement was pinned to the gates of Buckingham Palace just before midnight, and not long afterwards the arrival of the royal baby was broadcast on radio news bulletins.

In the hours after the baby prince's birth, thousands of telegrams poured into Buckingham Palace offering congratulations from around the world. Bonfires were lit around the country to celebrate the arrival of a future monarch, following a tradition that had been kept for centuries. Outside the palace the crowds sang and partied into the small hours until they were asked to keep their celebrations quieter to allow mother and baby to get some rest.

The new second-in-line to the throne was soon ensconced in a nursery next to his mother's bedroom and spent his early weeks in quiet seclusion while the outside world continued to fete him with traditional gun salutes and peals of bells. Elizabeth was overjoyed with her son, writing to her aunt, May Elphinstone, that the baby was "too sweet for words", adding that she could hardly believe she had a son of her own. Her mother Queen Elizabeth described her grandson as a "darling" baby. The little prince's other grandmother, Princess Alice, was living in Greece at the time of his birth and heard about his arrival in a telegram from her son. Her sister, Queen Louise of Sweden, also wrote to her, affectionately describing the infant prince as having "a little bit

The private birth of a prince

For centuries politicians witnessed the heir's birth, but Elizabeth would give birth without them

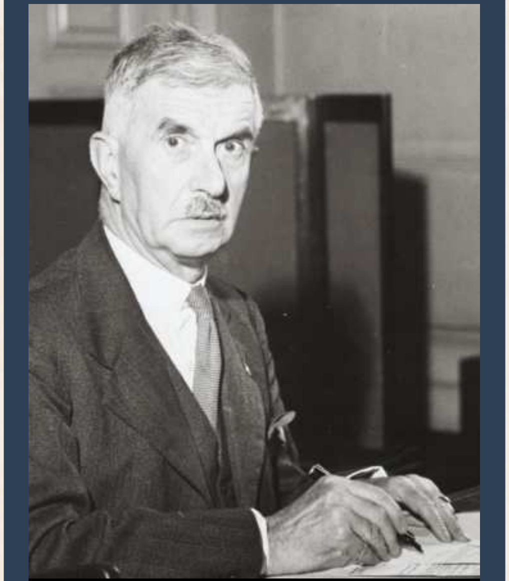
* * *

As final preparations were made for the arrival of the longed-for heir, the home secretary James Chuter Ede was expected to attend the delivery to ensure that the baby wasn't substituted at the moment of birth. However, the idea seemed increasingly unnecessary and intrusive. When it was pointed out that a 1931 law meant that up to seven ministers from different parts of the Empire might have to attend, King George VI decided to bring the tradition to an end once and for all.

It meant that Prince Charles became the first royal baby born without the presence of a politician for hundreds of years. Official witnesses to a royal birth had been compulsory since the end of the 17th century after the Protestant enemies of the Catholic King James II claimed that the healthy baby boy born to his queen in 1688 was actually a changeling.

Since then, queens and princesses had given birth with politicians in attendance. Queen Victoria decided in 1894 just the home secretary would attend. By the early 20th century he was usually in a discreet position outside the door to allow the royal mother a degree of privacy, but he was still required to attend all deliveries.

The ending of this royal tradition in 1948 meant that the last baby to be born in the presence of a politician was Princess Alexandra of Kent. The House of Windsor's future monarch had begun modernising from the moment of Prince Charles' birth.



James Chuter Ede, home secretary between 1945 and 1951, was told with just weeks to spare that his presence wouldn't be required for the birth of the heir to the throne's baby

Elizabeth and Philip photographed with Charles and Anne

of fair fluff for hair". However, the outside world was kept waiting for a glimpse of the heir, with the first official portraits taken by royal favourite Cecil Beaton on 14 December, exactly a month after his birth. But even then there was no name to go with the face – that was to be kept a closely guarded secret until the day of his christening.

On 15 December 1948, the archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, baptised the second-in-line to the throne as Charles Arthur Philip George. The baby had been carried into the service in the Music Room at Buckingham Palace wearing the Honiton lace christening gown first used by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert for their children. Fisher used water from the River Jordan for the baptism itself, which took place, as was traditional, at the gilded silver Lily Font.

"The crowds sang and partied into the small hours"

The prince, born to be king, was supported by eight godparents at his christening, among them two reigning monarchs. His godfathers included his proud grandpa King George VI, King Haakon VII of Norway, as well as Prince George of Greece, and his great-uncle David Bowes-Lyon, the younger brother of Queen Elizabeth. His godmothers were led by his great-grandmother Queen Mary, while his aunt, Princess Margaret, also stood sponsor. Philip's grandmother, Victoria, Dowager Marchioness of Milford Haven was another godmother, with his cousin Patricia Brabourne completing the line up.

His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Edinburgh, as he was officially known, spent his first Christmas with his family at Sandringham. However, the New Year would bring big changes for the little prince. In July 1949, Clarence House was finally ready for its new residents after an extensive refurbishment programme led by the Duke of Edinburgh, which had drawn some criticism when it went over budget. So Charles left his grandparents' home at Buckingham Palace to move just round the corner with his parents. However, his parting from George VI and Elizabeth wouldn't last long.

The king's health had been giving cause for concern for some time. Two days before the birth of the boy who now stood to one day inherit his throne, George VI had been diagnosed with arteriosclerosis, which was so severe his doctors were concerned he might lose a leg. He had determined to keep his condition secret from Princess Elizabeth while she had her baby but shared the news soon afterwards. After she had recovered from her difficult delivery, his heir found herself taking on more of her father's duties. Meanwhile, Prince Philip, who had longed to return to active service, had been made second in command of Chequers, part of the Mediterranean fleet. He left for Malta with his wife following him not long afterwards. The baby Prince Charles was left with his grandparents.

Much of his day-to-day care was carried out by his nanny, Helen Lightbody, who was brought in to look after the little prince when he was a month old. Then aged 30, she had previously worked for the duke and duchess of Gloucester, supervising their two sons, Prince William and Prince Richard. Born in Scotland, she was known for her stern approach, which would later earn her the nickname 'No Nonsense Lightbody'. Her disciplined nursery became the centre of the young prince's world, and she was often seen pushing him through London's parks in his pram.

Charles was also cared for by Mabel Anderson, who joined the royal household as an under nanny in 1949. She was far more relaxed and fun than her stentorian boss, and the two women became important figures in the young prince's life. However, it was Queen Elizabeth who really took Charles under her wing. She clearly loved playing and spending time with her grandson and took charge of ensuring each birthday and Christmas he spent away from his parents was filled with many special moments to remember.

Years later, Prince Charles would talk about how his mother didn't spend as much time with him as he wished and their first separation – as she headed to Malta – was longer than first anticipated as Princess Elizabeth decided to extend her stay and enjoy Christmas on the island. When she returned at the start of 1950 she spent several days in London catching up on her work before heading to Sandringham, where the toddler prince had spent Christmas with his grandparents.

Although it was usual for upper-class families to spend time apart from their children, some US media reports criticised Elizabeth for her extended stays away after she headed back to Malta that spring for another break with her husband. When she returned she was in the early stages of her second pregnancy and back home there were more calls on her time. As the health of George VI continued to cause concern, there were more responsibilities for his heir to take on, but she was also able to pass happy days with her baby son, who was soon to becomea big brother.

Charles' early years were filled with family fun – here, aged around two, he plays hide-and-seek with his mother

A young Prince Charles poses with his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth. The two shared a very close bond

However, Prince Philip was still in Malta and only returned to England in July 1950 to await the birth of the new baby. Princess Anne arrived on 15 August that year in a far more straightforward delivery that took place at Clarence House. Now in command of the frigate Magpie, Philip travelled back and forth between England and Malta in the following months, leaving for another extended stay after the christening of his daughter. Charles, who now shared his nursery with a sister, waved goodbye again to his mother in November as she headed out to join Philip. Although still young, the prince was spending increasingly less time with his parents and relying more and more on his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth.

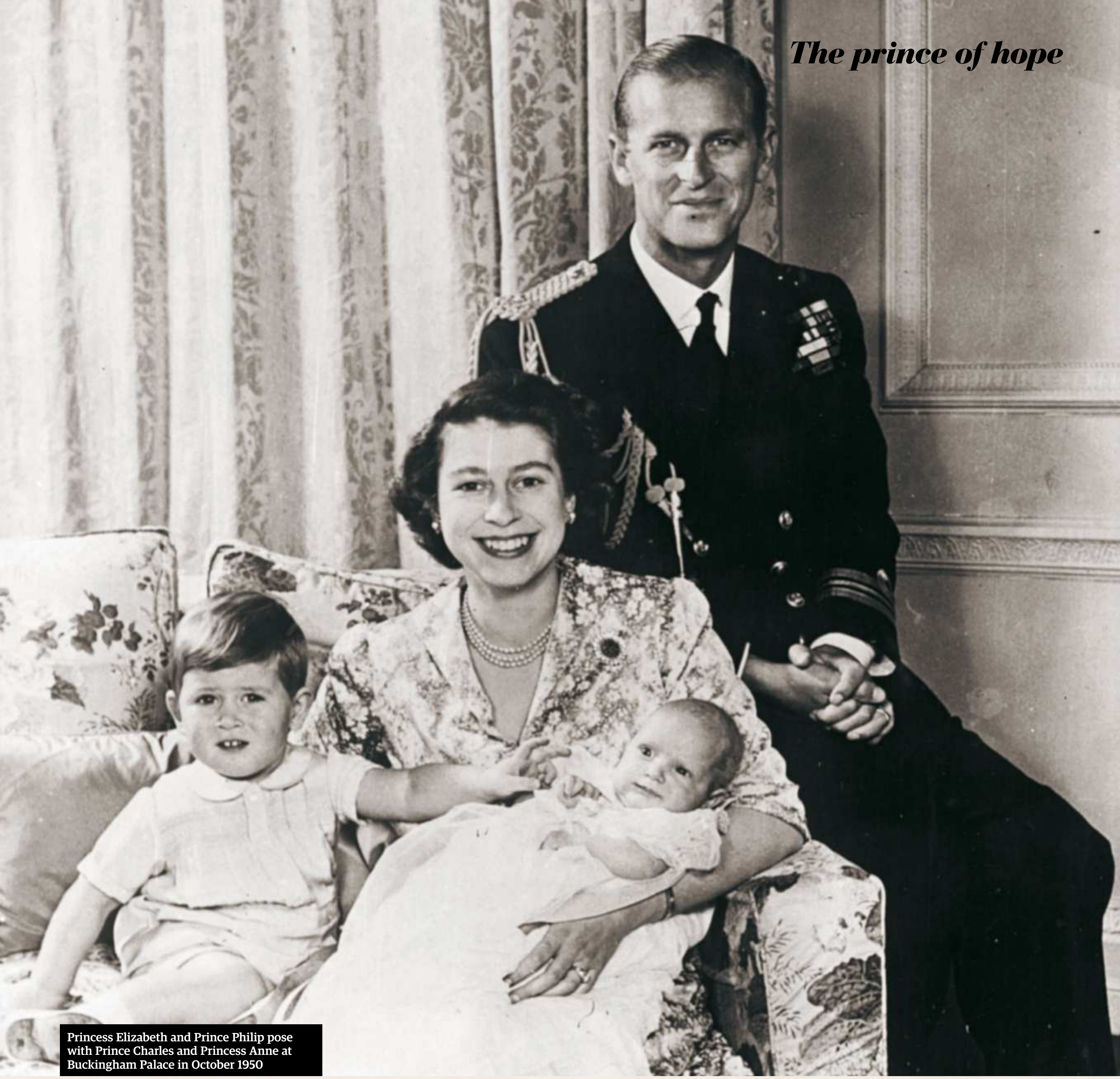
> “Some reports criticised Elizabeth for her extended stays away”

The time he did spend with Philip would grow tense as the Duke of Edinburgh saw how sensitive Charles could be and tried to train it out of him by encouraging him to brush off problems in the same practical way that he himself had always found so effective. It would cause friction between the two men in later years and even in early childhood. Philip was as likely to tell his young son to pick himself up and dust himself off as he was to offer cuddles and kisses after a tumble.

However, he was also a fun father, initiating hours of fun and games while he was at home. He was also quite clearly the head of their household, taking the lead in family matters even though his wife's role as queen-in-waiting was rapidly taking on more significance.

In October 1951, Elizabeth's position as heir to the throne took the couple to Canada and the United States for an official tour that would keep

The birth of a king in waiting was announced with the traditional, simple bulletin pinned to the gates of Buckingham Palace



Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip pose with Prince Charles and Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace in October 1950

them away from home for over a month and cause them to miss their son's third birthday. On their return to England, Charles was waiting for them at Euston station with his grandmother but had to take second place to the formalities, receiving a kiss from his mother and a pat on the head from his father after they had greeted Queen Elizabeth.

It was in another moment of separation that Prince Charles' childhood changed forever. His mother was in Kenya when, on 6 February 1952, her father died in his sleep and she became queen. Her son was now heir to the throne, with a new title of duke of Cornwall and a new role that beckoned for him after a childhood that had started in the bliss of a cosy family life but had also entailed plenty of painful separations.

Soon after the birth of Prince Charles, his grandmother Queen Elizabeth wrote that "something as happy and simple and hopeful for the future as a little son is indeed a joy". As the House of Windsor contemplated a new era with yet more change to come, Charles remained the great joy of his family's life, but, as the heir they had always desired from Princess Elizabeth, he was also their great hope for the future. With that came a great burden of responsibility that would soon come to weigh heavily on the young prince's shoulders.

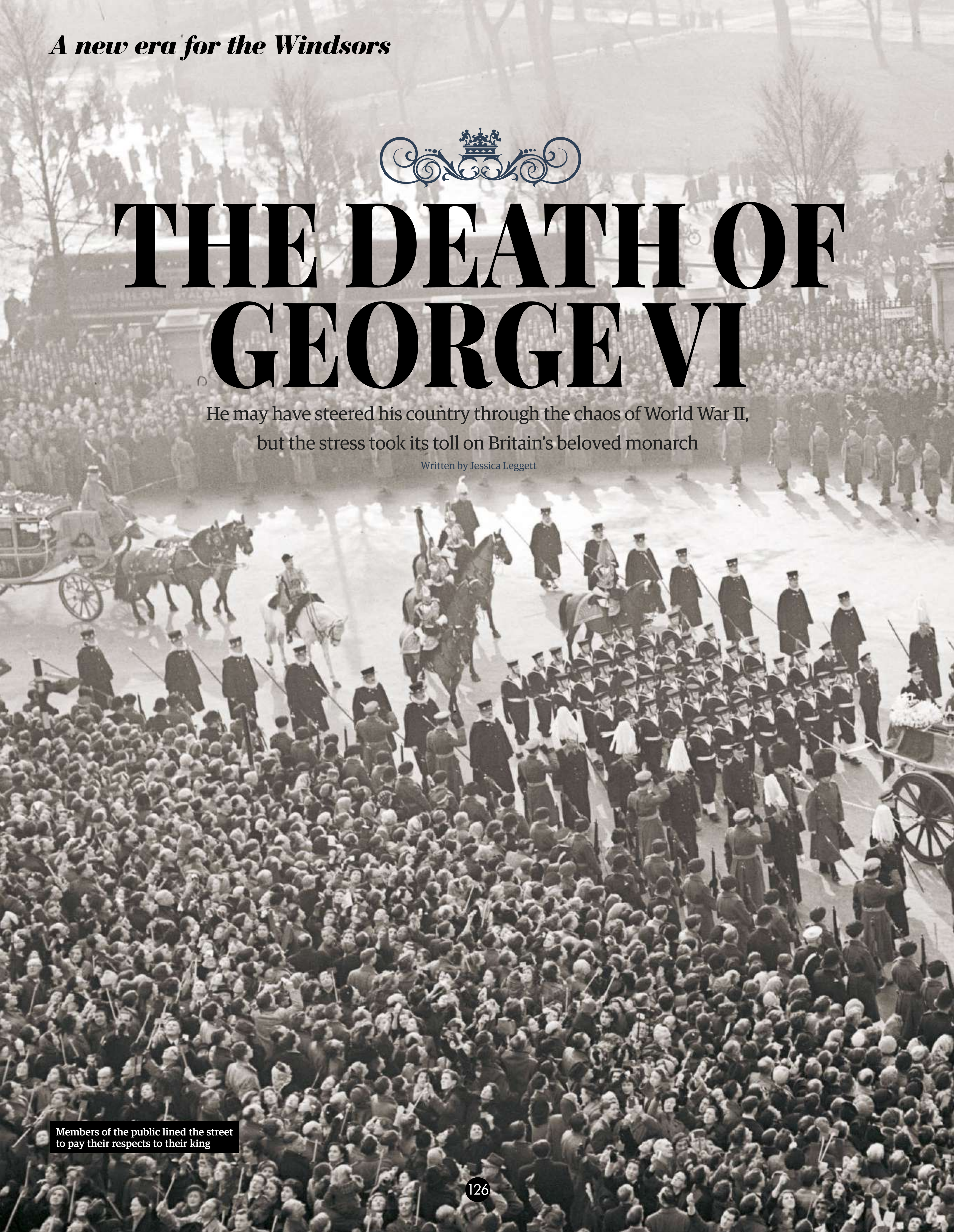
The last summer of King George VI saw young Charles spend sunny days with his beloved grandparents

© Getty

THE DEATH OF GEORGE VI

He may have steered his country through the chaos of World War II, but the stress took its toll on Britain's beloved monarch

Written by Jessica Leggett



Members of the public lined the street to pay their respects to their king

It was the 6 February 1952. The king's valet, James McDonald, was up bright and early to attend to his majesty. As usual, he started to prepare a bath for the king, knowing that the running water would be enough to wake him. But as the bath continued to fill up and the telltale signs of the king's footsteps could not be heard, McDonald's heart sank. Entering the king's bedroom to see a lifeless body, he rushed to get the doctor, who confirmed his fears – King George had died in his sleep.

Plagued with health problems and a heavy smoker for most of his life, George had been in decline for quite some time. His arteries had hardened and he had to give up a number of public appearances due to severe pain in his right leg and foot, caused by Buerger's disease. In fact, George almost lost his right leg due to an arterial blockage and had to be given a lumbar sympathectomy in March 1949.

George's poor health, as well as his smoking habit, had been exacerbated due to the stress of World War II and the post-war years. He had led his country admirably and along with his family had become a symbol of hope during the dark times of war. But it was a lot to deal with, particularly for a naturally anxious man who had reluctantly agreed to bear the crown.

Following the issues with his right leg, George's tour to Australia and New Zealand had to be postponed. It was decided that the tour should be rearranged so that George's eldest daughter and heir, Princess Elizabeth, could go instead with her husband Prince Philip. As the king's health increasingly declined, Elizabeth began to take on a lot more responsibility to support her father, who she absolutely adored.

However, the worst was yet to come. In May 1951, the king was able to open the Festival of Britain, but it was painfully clear that he was unwell. He underwent X-rays that revealed a shadow had developed on his left lung. Hoping to avoid alarming the king, his doctors told him that he was suffering with a mild form of pneumonia, which could be treated with penicillin injections.

The next month, Princess Elizabeth attended the Trooping of the Colour on behalf of her father while he tried to recover from his illness. Yet over the coming months it became evident the king was suffering from something far worse than a bout of treatable pneumonia. After more tests it was confirmed that a malignant tumour had been found in George's left lung. It was recommended to the king that he undergo an operation to have the affected lung completely removed.

George felt uneasy about going under the knife, but his doctors assured him that it was the best possible treatment. To prevent him and the rest of his family from becoming even more anxious, they claimed that 'structural changes' necessitated the removal of the lung, rather than admitting that it was, in fact, cancer.

For the operation, a makeshift operating theatre was constructed on the first floor of Buckingham Palace, complete with an operating table, lighting and other surgical equipment. It was the best way to keep the king's condition under wraps and to ensure he had privacy during the operation.

"After more tests it was confirmed that a malignant tumour had been found"

The Queen Mother (George's widow), the new queen, Elizabeth II, and Princess Margaret in mourning

The streets of London were filled with people wishing to pay their respects to the king

King George pictured at London Airport a week before his untimely death at Sandringham

The operation to remove the lung was conducted on the 23 September 1951, led by Clement Price Thomas, who was ultimately made a Knight Commander of the Royal Victoria Order for his service to the king. George had been injected with anaesthetic inside his own room before he was wheeled to the theatre. While his left lung was successfully removed, the doctors' worst fears were confirmed during the operation – the cancer had also spread to the king's right lung. At best, George had a year to live.

Although the prognosis was not good, George's doctors resisted telling him the devastating news that he was suffering with lung cancer. The only person who appeared to work it out was the king's close friend and former prime minister Winston Churchill, who deduced the gravity of George's illness after discussing the matter with his own doctor. In the meantime, George concentrated on his recovery, attempting to get out of bed for a few minutes each day to improve his poor circulation.

By October the king was still unwell. Unable to leave his bed to attend the Privy Council, a small delegation of the councillors were forced to gather around his bedroom door in order to conduct business. As for Princess Elizabeth, she journeyed to Canada with Prince Philip for a month-long tour, which had already been postponed because of her father's illness. With concern rising about the king's condition, Elizabeth's private secretary, Martin Charteris, carried with him a draft Accession Declaration and a message to the

George restored public faith in the monarchy after his brother sparked the abdication crisis in 1936

Houses of Parliament, just in case George died while they were away.

The king's spirits were lifted when Churchill was elected as prime minister once again on 25 October, and he seemed to be improving. By 14 November he was well enough to attend Prince Charles' third birthday, and that December George was able to pre-record his annual Christmas broadcast for that year. He then travelled to Sandringham for Christmas with his family, even managing to enjoy a few rounds of shooting across his estate.

As the end of January approached, Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip were preparing to head out on a tour of Australia and New Zealand via Kenya. The tour had long been in the works and the original plan had been for George and his wife Queen Elizabeth to go, but the king was still not well enough to travel. Even so, nothing would stop George from seeing his daughter off at London Airport on 31 January, despite medical advice that he should not go.

George's appearance at the airport was the last time he would be seen by the public. He spent his final days at Sandringham, and on 5 February, the day before his death, George enjoyed what would be his last day of shooting. His footman, Daniel Long, had taken a warm cup of cocoa up to the king at 11pm, not realising that he would be the last one to see George alive. At 7:30am the next morning, George was found dead in his bed after suffering a coronary thrombosis (a blood clot to the heart) during in his sleep. He was only 56.

Just over an hour since George had been declared dead, the codeword for his passing, 'Hyde Park Corner', was triggered by his principal private secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles. When Churchill was informed of the 'bad news' he blustered, "Bad news? The worst!" As the seriousness of the king's health had not been made known to the public his death came as a shock to many.

Pictured in 1948, the toll of WWII and his smoking habit had physically aged the king beyond his years

Princess Elizabeth started taking on more and more responsibility as her father's health began to falter

Sadly, one of the last people to discover the news of George's passing was Princess Elizabeth, who had spent the night at the remote Treetops Hotel in Kenya observing wildlife. Upon receiving the news she hastily returned home with the rest of the royal party – at 25 years old she was now the new queen of the United Kingdom.

As news of the king's death swept the country, Union Jacks were flown at half-mast, shops and factories were closed for the day and members of the public began to arrive outside Buckingham Palace to mourn. George's coffin was kept at St Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham, for two days before it travelled to London via train and subsequently moved to Westminster Hall to lie in state from 11 February, where more than 300,000 people arrived to get one last glimpse of their highly respected king.

George's funeral was held on 15 February at St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, with his body interred in the Royal Vault. The Government sent a wreath – made from white and lilac carnations – in the shape of the George Cross, the award founded by George, with the phrase 'For Valour' written on a card by Churchill. In 1969, George's body was transferred from the Royal Vault to the King George VI Memorial Chapel, which was also located inside St George's Chapel.

After spending just over 15 years on the throne, George had successfully restored faith in the monarchy after the disastrous abdication of his brother, King Edward VIII. Remarkably, the funeral of George's youngest daughter, Princess Margaret, was held exactly 50 years later on 15 February, 2002. The royal family would suffer another tragedy when George's wife, remembered now as Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, passed away just seven weeks later. Both of their remains were interred in the Memorial Chapel, reunited with their father, husband and Britain's endearing king.

A moving tribute

Churchill remembered his close friend King George in one of the most emotional speeches of his life

Originally disliking one another, the friendship between King George and Winston Churchill had developed during the turbulent years of World War II. They famously met in private once a week in order to discuss any developments in the war while enjoying a spot of lunch together.

Churchill had known for some time that George was dying. The day after George's death, he travelled to London Airport to greet his new sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, as she returned from Kenya. On the way there he dictated a speech, which would be broadcast that afternoon, in honour of his friend and king. According to one of his secretaries, the iron-willed Churchill was "in a flood of tears".

Churchill's emotional eulogy has gone down in history as one of his most eloquent speeches. In one particular passage, Churchill spoke of the king's illness and declared, "The last few months of King George's life, with all the pain and physical stresses that he endured – his life hanging by a thread from day to day, and he all the time cheerful and undaunted, stricken in body but quite undisturbed and even unaffected in spirit – these had made a profound and an enduring impression and should be a help to all."

His words, a tribute to his dear friend, perfectly summed up the difficulties that King George had bravely faced in his final years. With an uneasy start, Churchill would soon develop a close relationship with Elizabeth, mentoring her through the first three years of her reign until his retirement in 1955.

The king and Winston Churchill became firm allies after the latter's election as prime minister

© Getty

Princess Margaret as photographed by her husband Antony Armstrong-Jones in 1959

PRINCESS MARGARET'S FORBIDDEN LOVER

Beautiful, wealthy and spoiled, Princess Margaret wanted for nothing – so why was her love for a dashing war hero doomed to fail?

Written by Catherine Curzon

Once upon a time, there lived a princess who had almost everything that a girl could dream of. Beautiful, privileged and the envy of everyone who knew her, all that was missing to complete the happy picture was a real-life prince charming. And who better to fulfil the role than a hero of the Royal Air Force who was as handsome as she was lovely; a man with a chestful of medals and the trust of the king himself? For the princess and her Spitfire ace this should have been a fairy tale come true, yet the tangled, tragic love life of the late Princess Margaret never truly found its happy ending.

Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret Rose was born in 1930 to Albert and Elizabeth, the quietly domesticated duke and duchess of York who shunned the social whirlwind she would later plunge into. Margaret's elder sister was a young lady named Elizabeth, better known to us today as Queen Elizabeth II. To their parents, however, Margaret and Elizabeth were simply Margot and Lilibet, the daughters they adored.

During Princess Margaret's idyllic childhood, there was no suggestion that she would one day be the daughter of a king, let alone the sister of the longest-reigning monarch in British history. Fate, however, has a habit of moving in the most mysterious ways and, in 1936, romance brought scandal to the House of Windsor.

Less than 11 months after he ascended the throne, King Edward VIII abdicated. Passionately in love with American divorcee Wallis Simpson, Edward was faced with a choice between romance and duty. The king famously chose to follow his heart, turning his back on royal privilege to be with the woman he adored. When Margaret faced the same decision years later, her conclusion was not so romantic.

As Edward left England to start his new life, the world changed forever for those he left behind. Margaret's father was a timid, shy, man who famously struggled to control a debilitating stammer and certainly had no ambitions to rule as king. Yet he knew that he could not refuse the role that duty now demanded him to take and, in December 1936, was enthroned as King George VI.

At just six years old, Margaret Rose was no longer simply the daughter of a shy, unassuming duke. Now she was second in line to the throne itself and the quiet life she enjoyed at 145 Piccadilly was over. The royal family took up residence in Buckingham Palace, yet Elizabeth and Margaret, though suddenly catapulted to the forefront of public attention, found their lives little changed as the days went by.

The new king and queen did all they could to ensure that their daughters enjoyed as normal a childhood as possible. They attended Brownies and visited family, remaining safely out of the public eye. The girls were educated as young ladies and spoiled rotten by their doting parents, especially the king. While young Elizabeth was prepared for the role that one day awaited her, Margaret had no such burden to bear and the world lay at her feet.

As Margaret blossomed into a young woman, she began to indulge her love of glamour and the finer things in life. Slender, graceful and as beautiful as any fairy-tale princess, she had a passion for fashion and whether sparkling on the red carpet or indulging in her beloved philanthropic events, she delighted in being the centre of attention. Margaret also had a keen intelligence and a sharp, biting wit; people longed to be part of her circle, and she was soon at the heart of society. Although she was not yet an adult, it was clear that Margaret would one day be a most eligible princess indeed.

When Princess Margaret was 17, she accompanied her parents on an official visit to South Africa; it was to be fateful trip. For the duration of the visit, Margaret was chaperoned by Group Captain Peter Townsend, a 33-year-old former RAF officer who was one of the King's most trusted equerries. Townsend was a bona fide war hero, a character cut from the mould of a matinee idol. Handsome, assured and urbane, he had won the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1940 for his heroic deeds. Townsend flew in the Battle of Britain, even surviving a ditch into the ocean. His career was glittering, and even wounds sustained in combat couldn't stop him – just weeks after losing a big toe to the surgeon's knife, the Group Captain was back in action, flying Spitfires into battle.

The Princess photographed by Victor Blackman as she arrives back on English soil after travelling in Canada

At the end of World War II, Townsend retired from the Royal Air Force and joined the Windsor household as an equerry of King George VI. He became a valued and trusted member of the king's intimate circle and would later be appointed comptroller of the Queen Mother's household, a mark of his high status. Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the beautiful young princess and the handsome, experienced RAF officer fell madly in love. There could not be a happily ever after for the couple though, because Townsend wasn't just dashing, brave and celebrated – he was also married.

While Elizabeth married Prince Philip and settled into the role of wife, mother and queen-in-waiting, Margaret's own life was a whirlwind of social engagements, excitement and laughter. She had no shortage of admirers and even found time in her packed calendar to perform royal duties and support a range of charities. What really caught the eye of the press and public, however, was how much she liked to socialise, and she was always the belle of the ball.

The world dealt Princess Margaret a shattering blow in 1952 when, on a bleak February day, lung cancer claimed the life of the 56-year-old king. George and Margaret had been devoted to one another, with the monarch always indulging his youngest child's wishes and, some argued, helping to nurture that spoiled, entitled little rich girl that some claimed she had become.

Now, with the death of her father, Margaret was left bereft. The woman who had been alive with happiness and joy sank deeper and deeper into depression and despair, utterly overwhelmed by her grief. Without her father's influence and support she was suddenly cut adrift. All that had seemed so set in her world had now been turned on its head.

With Elizabeth now queen, Margaret was also deprived of the good counsel of her sister and as the new monarch and her family moved into Buckingham Palace, Princess Margaret and her mother left for Clarence House. With them they took their new comptroller, a certain Group Captain Peter Townsend. Amid the emotional tumult, he was more than happy to lend Margaret a strong shoulder to cry on.

In fact, the change of employment was not the only turning point in Townsend's life. Like Margaret, he too was caught in a period of emotional turmoil thanks to his ongoing divorce. However, the story behind the breakdown of the Townsend's marriage hints at scandal beneath the official explanation.

In 1941, Townsend met Rosemary Pawle, and she was bowled over by the dashing young war hero. After just two weeks together the couple were married and over the next four years, two sons were born to the Townsends. Perhaps unsurprisingly given their fortnight of courtship, the marriage didn't work out in the long term, but the official reasons for the split remain tantalisingly vague. Called away from home first by his military duties and then by his services to the king, Townsend was increasingly absent from his family. Tired of being married to a man she rarely saw, Rosemary sought comfort elsewhere and began an affair with John de László, a dalliance that finally resulted in the couple's divorce in 1952.

Or so the papers believed. Rosemary and Townsend, however, remained tight-lipped even as the decades passed. No matter how much money the papers offered the former husband and wife to spill the beans, both understandably refused to offer any behind the scenes gossip about the breakdown of their marriage.

In fact, when George VI died in 1952, Princess Margaret had never felt so alone, so utterly despairing, and in her grief she sought some measure of comfort from those she trusted. Not for her were the platitudes of her socialite friends nor the society gents who filled her dance cards, it was to Peter Townsend that she turned. Though there is no reliable evidence that the couple became lovers in 1952, it doesn't take too much of a leap of faith to suppose that – even if they weren't sexually intimate – their relationship had certainly moved beyond chaperone and chaperoned. By the time Townsend filed for divorce that November, he and Margaret were certainly closer than they had ever been before, and the stage was set for scandal and heartbreak.

In 1953, Queen Elizabeth II was still settling into her reign and preparing for a grand and glittering coronation. The last thing she needed was a domestic drama, yet when Peter Townsend asked Princess Margaret to marry him, drama was just what the new queen was about to get.

Of course, the excited young Princess was thrilled to receive Townsend's proposal and hoped to accept him, but she could not do so without the approval of her sister. Although it might seem strange that she had to request her sibling's permission, the Georgians can be thanked for that particular loophole. The Royal Marriages Act, enshrined in law in 1772, set down the stringent rules under which members of the royal family could marry, its intention being to protect the integrity of the royal household. Central to its power was the clause that all members of the family must secure the official consent of the reigning monarch before they were permitted to marry their betrothed.

For those over 25 there was a very small get-out clause, however. In this case, so long as Parliament didn't refuse the marriage, then the wedding

A photograph of Margaret taken in the 1940s

> "They attended Brownies and visited family, remaining safely out of the public eye"

Group Captain Peter Townsend

Meet the war hero who swept Margaret clean off her feet

Group Captain Peter Townsend was born in 1914 and before he turned 20, was soaring through the clouds with the Royal Air Force. It was the start of a career that would be lauded as high-flying in more ways than one.

Townsend's celebrated World War II record is a roll call of victories, near misses and heroic escapes, including one ditch in the ocean and even an amputated toe! When his injury kept him from flying he retained control of his squadron and was back in the air before a month had passed. Within six short months, Townsend had earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar in recognition of his efforts.

When the war ended, the celebrated Spitfire ace was welcomed into the royal household as a trusted equerry to the king. By the time Townsend met Princess Margaret in 1947, he had already been married for over five years and was the father of two children. His marriage ended in 1952, conspicuously just before his romance with Margaret and his proposal to her became public knowledge.

In the years following the end of their affair, Peter Townsend was posted to Brussels as air attaché at the British Embassy. It was here in Belgium that he fell in love with his secretary, Marie-Luce Jamagne, a woman who would later be noted for her striking resemblance to his royal former lover.

Townsend's 1959 marriage to Marie-Luce was a happy one. The couple had one daughter and were together until his death more than 40 years later.

Later in life, Townsend became a writer specialising in military history, as well as penning a biography of George VI. In his own autobiography he shared precious few details of the tumultuous romance he had enjoyed with the princess, preferring to keep those particular secrets to himself. Group Captain Peter Townsend died of stomach cancer at his home in France in 1995. He was 80 years old.

could take place after one year, whether or not the monarch had given consent.

So Margaret found her future decided by a rule that was almost 200 years old, and in Townsend she had found a far from perfect candidate. Not only was he much older than her, but he was also a divorcee. With the fate of Edward and the divorced Mrs Simpson fresh in her mind, Margaret must have guessed what the answer would be even before she sought permission. Even worse, the Church of England didn't recognise the marriages of those who were divorced as legitimate unions, rendering the couple's position even more precarious.

In fact, the queen didn't immediately refuse the request but instead asked her sister to wait a little longer before she made a decision. This would give everyone a chance to cool off, let Elizabeth adjust to her new role and also mean that Margaret was 25, the age at which she could marry without her sibling's permission. However, the news of the couple's relationship leaked out following the queen's coronation, an occasion at which Margaret and Townsend appeared to have eyes for nobody but each other. In a moment of unguarded domestic intimacy unthinkable for the brittle, headscarf-clad woman that Princess Margaret would become, she reached out to flick a piece of lint from Townsend's jacket. The tabloids loved it and so did the British people, who wanted to see their Princess happy.

With public opinion rallying behind Margaret, the queen moved Townsend out of Clarence House and back to Buckingham Palace, yet Parliament had even more dramatic schemes in mind. The government flatly refused to sanction the marriage unless Margaret agreed to renounce her royal rights and privileges and gave up her right to the throne. Should she agree to abandon her place in the line of succession, then Margaret would be free to marry her love in a civil ceremony. Should she wish to retain her rights of succession, even though she was highly unlikely ever to be queen, then there was no way that Margaret could marry Townsend.

A committed Christian, the choice was a stark one for Princess Margaret and she knew that her decision might have ramifications for the whole nation. She was separated from Townsend physically when the government had him posted to Brussels and, after long, agonising battles with her conscience, she made her decision.

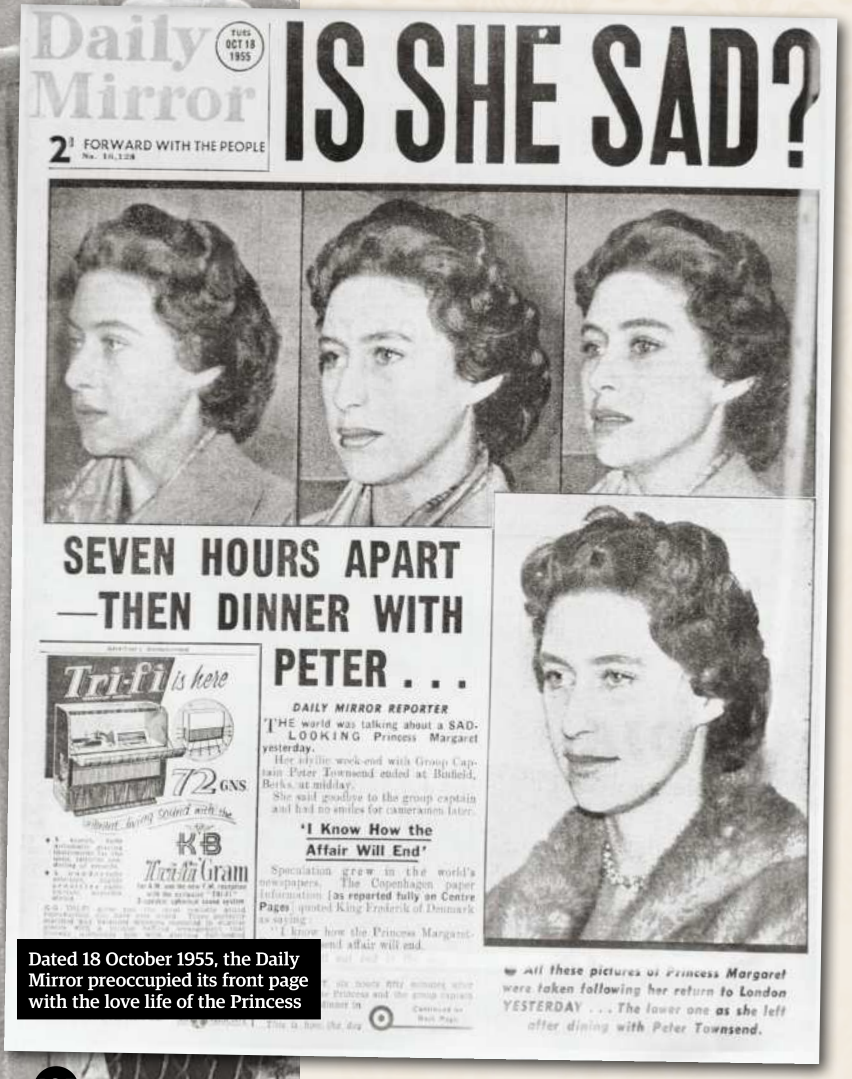
A letter uncovered in 2009 from Princess Margaret to the prime minister, Anthony Eden, reveals that she had entertained other doubts about the marriage and was struggling with her decision. In the crucible of the public eye and press attention, the young woman was determined

Margaret and Peter Townsend photographed during the Royal Tour of South Africa, 1947

> "Margaret must have guessed what the answer would be even before she sought permission"

to make the right choice, and make it alone, regardless of what anyone else might tell her. When she did make her statement renouncing Townsend, however, it was one that he had written for her, carefully setting down the words in a neat pencil script.

Citing the Church's stance on the marital status of divorcees, as well as her duty to her sister's subjects, Margaret took to the airwaves to inform the nation that she could not marry Peter Townsend. "Mindful of the Church's teachings that Christian marriage is indissoluble, and conscious of my duty to the Commonwealth," she declared, the couple went their separate ways. Yet were these noble words heartfelt, or merely intended to



Daily Mirror

TUES OCT 18 1955

2d FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE

IS SHE SAD?

SEVEN HOURS APART —THEN DINNER WITH PETER . . .

DAILY MIRROR REPORTER

THE world was talking about a SAD-LOOKING Princess Margaret yesterday.

Her idyllic week-end with Group Captain Peter Townsend ended at Binfield, Berks, at midday.

She said goodbye to the group captain and had no smiles for cameramen later.

'I Know How the Affair Will End'

Speculation grew in the world's newspapers. The Copenhagen paper Information [as reported fully on Centre Pages] quoted King Frederik of Denmark as saying:

"I know how the Princess Margaret-[illegible] end affair will end.

Tri-fi is here

72 GNS

KB Tri-fi Gram

All these pictures of Princess Margaret were taken following her return to London YESTERDAY . . . The lower one as she left after dining with Peter Townsend.

Dated 18 October 1955, the Daily Mirror preoccupied its front page with the love life of the Princess

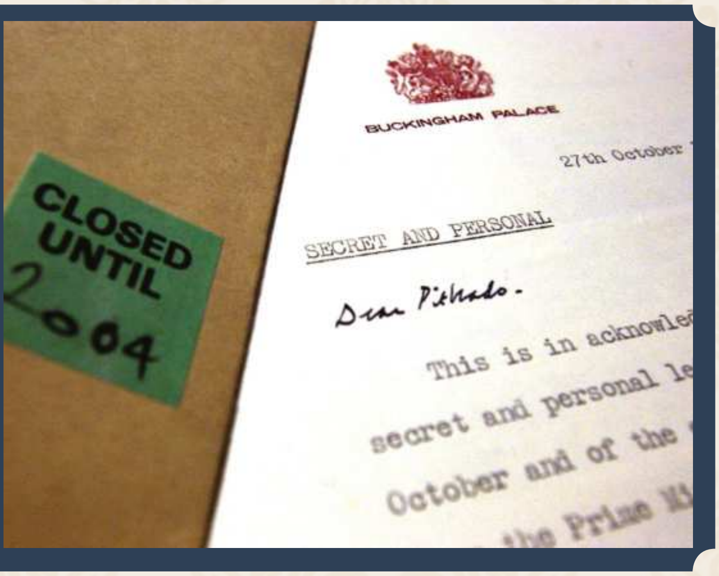
The letter that was never published

In anticipation of accepting Townsend's proposal, a letter was drafted and ready to go

On Friday 2 January 2004, the secrecy surrounding a series of classified documents finally expired. Among the files held at the National Archives Office in London was correspondence between Buckingham Palace and the Prime Minister's Office regarding Princess Margaret's very public love life.

Filed with the official letters was one very startling piece of sentimental history: a drafted letter written by Princess Margaret, which acknowledged her intention to marry Peter Townsend, and agreeing to relinquish her claim to the throne.

Ultimately, however, Princess Margaret decided to follow her head and not her heart, and instead issued an announcement on the 31 October 1955 declaring that she would not go ahead with the marriage to Townsend. Her drafted letter of acceptance was never published.



CLOSED UNTIL 2004

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

27th October

SECRET AND PERSONAL

Dear Pitchads.

This is in acknowle

secret and personal le

October and of the

the Prime Mi

"In a moment of domestic intimacy, she reached out to flick lint from Townsend's jacket"

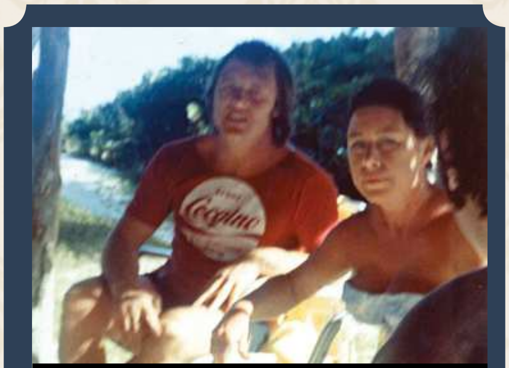
cover up a more cynical motive? It has since been speculated that Margaret's decision was driven not by Christian faith, but by her own love of pomp and ceremony, and the fact that she simply would not give up her royal lifestyle and privileges for love. Where her uncle had followed his heart, Margaret had, according to some, followed her ego.

As the years passed, Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend were never close again. Courted by eligible suitors from across the world, she never entertained another proposal until, in 1959, Townsend told Margaret that he was to remarry. The very next day, the princess accepted an offer of marriage from photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones, later Lord Snowdon. Once again Margaret had chosen a far from ideal candidate, but at least this time he was not a divorced father of two.

As a social and fashion icon, Margaret's life was never far from the headlines or from the whispered gossip of society salons. Her name was linked with lovers as diverse as Warren Beatty, David Niven and Robin Douglas-Home - who took his own life when their romance ended. As she and Snowdon lived increasingly separate lives, Margaret began an affair with Roddy Llewellyn that reached heights of emotion that drove the princess to attempt suicide. Around 17 years her junior, Llewellyn was a tabloid dream and just weeks after his romance with Margaret was splashed across the front page of the press, she

Peter Townsend photographed with his wife, Marie-Luce Jamagne, whose resemblance to Princess Margaret was uncanny

Princess Margaret as photographed on her wedding day



Margaret and John 'Biffo' Bindon, whom she claimed never to have met, enjoy the sunshine

The princess and the gangster

Did MI5 really intervene to save Margaret from scandal?

John Bindon, known as 'Biffo' on the streets, might as well have been from a different planet to Princess Margaret. Sometime actor, occasional murder suspect and long-time friend to some of the most notorious gangland names in London, he also claimed to have enjoyed some scandalous liaisons with the princess.

Biffo made his unlikely foray into high society thanks to a love affair with Vicki Hodge, the daughter of a baronet. At the hedonistic height of the 1960s, he claimed that Margaret had invited him to her Caribbean hideaway on Mustique, where they had enjoyed passionate encounters in the sand.

Margaret flatly denied ever having met Biffo, wilfully ignoring the existence of a photograph taken of the couple on Mustique. Though they're not the scandalous pictures rumoured to exist, Biffo's t-shirt, emblazoned with the slogan 'Enjoy Cocaine', must have set off alarm bells among the powers that be.

The story took another twist in 1971 when the Baker Street branch of Lloyds Bank was raided. Among the items rumoured to have been taken were saucy snaps of Biffo and the princess that had been placed in a safely deposit box by a gangster known as Michael X. Yet as speculation reached fever pitch, the government issued an unexpected gagging order. There was to be no reporting of the robbery, no speculation of the notice and definitely no discussion of illicit, explicit photographs of members of the House of Windsor.

As the years passed the rumours of the princess, the gangster and the naughty pictures didn't fade away, but only grew louder. Conspiracy theories emerged that claimed the robbery had been orchestrated by MI5, acting under orders from the highest echelons of government to retrieve and destroy the photos.

With Michael X dead and nobody else willing to go on the record about the occurrence, it remains a tantalising speculation and has proved inspirational to writers and filmmakers. We will never know if the pictures existed or, if they did, what exactly they showed. For Princess Margaret, however, it's just one more chapter in her hedonistic story.

Margaret with her husband, Lord Snowdon, and their two children in June 1964

> "It has since been speculated that Margaret's decision was driven not by Christian faith"

and Snowdon publicly announced the end of their marriage. In 1978, the photographer and the princess were divorced.

Princess Margaret never remarried. Peter Townsend died in 1995 and she passed away in 2002. As the years sped by, she became a symbol of snobbish grandeur, the hedonistic sister who grew bitter in the shadow of her sibling, yet once she had been the focus of goodwill from a public who believed she deserved to be happy. Later, her unheard-of decision to divorce Snowdon catapulted the issue of royal marriage into the public eye. Her experience blazed a trail for those who would follow, ensuring that divorce became accepted in the royal household. No longer were members of the House of Windsor expected to suffer in silence and in the years that followed, several of her nieces and nephews followed her into the divorce courts.

Although Townsend and Margaret occasionally exchanged letters, they did not meet again for almost four decades. Quite by chance, the former lovers encountered one another at a Kensington Palace luncheon. Time had healed whatever wounds their separation had wrought and the two made a beeline for each other. Here, they spent the afternoon together, chatting like old friends and catching up on all that had happened to each other over the years.

Whether Princess Margaret's decision to reject the proposal of Peter Townsend and turn her back on love in favour of title was inspired by snobbish self-importance or religious and dutiful adherence to protocol, we will never truly know. Townsend, however, had his suspicions and wrote in his autobiography that Margaret had not been prepared to give up "her position, her prestige, her privy purse." His words are gently written, but scathing to interpret.

Famed for her love of partying, her scandalous liaisons and her altogether bohemian ways, whether Margaret would have been suited to life as the wife of a war hero is equally mysterious. She lived life to the full yet surely, sometimes, Princess Margaret Rose must have looked back on the road that she chose not to take and wonder wistfully 'what if'.

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HAPPY & GLORIOUS

During her 70 years on the throne, Queen Elizabeth has overseen great change to her nation

Written by Marcia Moody

On the evening of 5 February 1952, a young woman went up a tree a princess, and the following morning she came back down a queen. Princess Elizabeth and husband Prince Philip were just six days into a tour of Kenya, New Zealand and Australia, and after a busy first few days around Nairobi, they had a night to themselves at Treetops Hotel, near Nyeri in Kenya. After climbing a rickety ladder to tree house, the princess spent a few hours filming elephants at dusk with her cine-camera. She rose again before dawn the next morning to resume watching the wildlife, and unknown to her, more than 4,000 miles away, her father passed away soon afterwards.

She spent her last few hours of blissful unknowing filming rhinos at a watering hole and enjoying a breakfast of scrambled eggs and bacon, before descending at 10am to hit the road again. She wasn't to find out about her father's passing until that afternoon, as a coded telegram was unable to be deciphered because the keys to the code book couldn't be located. The news was eventually confirmed, and it was Prince Philip's job to inform his wife of the news.

King George VI had been a heavy smoker, and after being diagnosed with lung cancer the previous year, he had a lung removed, and was therefore deemed unfit to embark on a royal tour. His daughter, Princess Elizabeth, took his place, accompanied by her husband, and when she waved goodbye to her father on the tarmac at London Airport, he had seemed in good spirits. However, his health deteriorated fast, and he passed away in his sleep in the early hours of 6 February 1952 at Sandringham House. Prince Philip broke the news to his wife on a walk through the foothills of Mount Kenya, and the two of them spent some time talking and walking together. Elizabeth's private secretary, Martin Charteris, later said she was "very composed, master of her fate" as she left for the airport that evening, after writing letters of apology to those who were expecting her on the next leg of her tour. On the plane she was given a telegram from her mother, reading: "To: Her Majesty The Queen. All my thoughts and prayers are with you. Mummie, Buckingham Palace." Elizabeth was met straight off the plane in London by her prime minister, Winston Churchill, along with fellow political leaders and officers of state including Clement Attlee and Antony Eden. She was 25 years old and with two young children - Prince Charles was three and Princess Anne was 18 months - at home. Not only was she dealing with the death of her father, but her life had changed forever. Gone was her life as a young military wife, full-time mother and monarch in training.

The 1950s: Standing up to Churchill

In the years since her wedding she had lived in Malta where Prince Philip was stationed as a Royal Navy officer, and she would drive herself around, go to the cinema and attend dances, where the band would play her and Philip's song, 'People Will Say We're In Love', from the musical *Oklahoma*. Now Prince Philip's naval career would be over, and Elizabeth was queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith and supreme governor of the Church of England, and head of the Armed Forces. She was a woman plunged very much into a man's world.

Heads of the military and church, politicians and heads of state were all male, but she was already a formidable young woman, and she started her reign as she meant to go on. Her

6 FEBRUARY 1952

King George VI dies

The princess learns of her father's peaceful death while on tour in Kenya. The rest of the visit is cancelled and the new queen flies back to Britain to take her place as monarch.

2 MAY 1953

First football match

As the new queen of England, Elizabeth II attends her first football match. It is the 1953 FA Cup Final between Blackpool and Bolton Wanderers, with the former team boasting a win.

2 JUNE 1953

Queen Elizabeth's coronation

A respectable 18 months after her father's death, Elizabeth II is crowned at Westminster Abbey. An estimated 27 million people watch the event on TV, while 11 million listen on the radio.

24 NOVEMBER 1953

Commonwealth tour begins

With the coronation behind her, Queen Elizabeth II sets off on a tour of the Commonwealth. It is a continuation of the tour she had been on when her father died.

Cecil Beaton's official portrait of Elizabeth II's coronation

25 DECEMBER 1957

First televised Christmas speech

Queen Elizabeth II continues her father's tradition of a speech on Christmas Day, but in 1957, she gives her speech on television – live.

19 FEBRUARY 1960

Prince Andrew is born

The second son of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip – and the couple's third child – Prince Andrew is born inside Buckingham Palace and named after his paternal grandfather.

10 MARCH 1964

Prince Edward is born

The youngest of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip's children, young Prince Edward follows four years after his brother Andrew, and is also born at Buckingham Palace.

MAY 1965

The queen visits Germany

Elizabeth becomes the first reigning British monarch to set foot in Germany in 52 years. Staying in West Germany, the queen sees the Berlin Wall on her 11-day trip.

coronation was planned for the following year, and 78-year-old Winston Churchill did not want the event to be televised, as had been suggested. But the fledgling queen understood the importance of including the people on such an occasion - as well as embracing the advancements of the modern age - and insisted that it was. Just 16 months after Elizabeth had acceded to the throne - upon the passing of a monarch, it is deemed respectful to allow a certain period of mourning - Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was held on 2 June 1953 at Westminster Abbey. Her reign was off to a good start; she inherited a robustly royalist nation from her father that would remain with her throughout her life.

The 1960s: Keeping up with the Windsors

The easy-breezy spirit of the 1960s didn't blow quite as strongly down the corridors of Buckingham Palace as through the rest of the world, but to some extent, times they were a changin'. For many years royalty had for the most part succeeded quite well in keeping to themselves. Royal babies were born in palaces not hospitals, and children were educated by governesses at home, rather than in the public education system.

Prince Charles was the first heir to the throne to go to school, and in 1965 he was the first to sit GCE O Levels (passing five), followed by A Levels (gaining a B in History and C in French) two years later. Not only were members of the family going forth and mixing with the public, but the public themselves were also invited inside palace doors for the first time. At the suggestion of Prince Philip, Buckingham Palace was opened to the public in 1962 with the forming of the The Queen's Gallery - which displays items from the Royal Collection, the one that is held in trust for the nation rather than Her Majesty's private collection. Up until then, the closest anyone would have come was peering through the railings at the front of the palace, while a very select few would be invited to the annual garden parties. No one without an invitation would have been able to pass onto the forecourt of the palace and walk through its doors.

Six years later, there were also changes at the queen's Norfolk property, when Sandringham Country Park became open, free of charge, to the public. The opening up of both properties chipped away at the wall between the family and their public, and paved the way for a more modern relationship between the two, but the most ground-breaking move was yet to come. To commemorate Prince Charles becoming the prince of Wales, the queen agreed to the 1969 fly-on-the-wall documentary called *Royal Family*, which was filmed over the course of a year, and gave an amazing insight into life behind palace doors. The BBC aired the programme on 21 June 1969, and it was watched by 68 per cent of the population - while 350 million people tuned in around the world. It has not been shown since, for fears it made the family seem too 'ordinary'.

The 1970s: Let's talk

If advancements in the 1960s were about inviting the people closer, moves in the 1970s were about the royal family edging closer themselves. First Princess Diana, and later the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry, have all been credited with breaking down barriers and creating a new more 'touchy-feely' monarchy, but it was the queen who made the initial strides in 1970 - breaking centuries of royal protocol when she introduced 'the royal walkabout' while on a tour of New Zealand and Australia. In Wellington, New Zealand, she encountered a group of children, and after stopping to chat with them, ended up spending some time shaking their hands and receiving posies of flowers. It was a simple gesture, but it changed the face of royal tours forever. Before walkabouts were introduced, the family would wave remotely from a motorcade as it made its way through crowded streets, or there may be a wave and a smile as they left a building. Processing before the people, and being visible - rather than accessible - were the order of the day, while those deemed fit to meet the monarch would have been approved by courtiers, and the atmosphere would be formal.

However, as the starchy environs of the 1950s gave way to a more relaxed society, the reverence for the monarchy was evolving into a more emotional connection. The walkabouts sat perfectly in this evolution - a ground-breaking and canny move because it meant that the family no longer seemed quite so remote. Princess Diana

21 JUNE 1969

Royal Family airs

Now locked away from the public eye, a film following the lives of the royal family is aired. Princess Anne particularly hates the show, stating: "I thought it was a rotten idea."

1970

The royal walkabout

On a trip to Australia and New Zealand the first royal walkabout takes place, with the queen and her husband greeting as many people in the country as possible.

28 MAY 1972

Edward VIII dies

Having lived most of his post-monarch life in Paris, Edward VIII passes away. He will be buried at Windsor Castle. When Wallis Simpson dies 14 years later, she will be buried alongside him.

29 MARCH 1976

The first email

While at an army base, Elizabeth becomes one of the first heads of state to send an email. Given the username HME2 – Her Majesty Elizabeth II – in a few clicks, she sends her first email.

Elizabeth II's coronation was televised, another first for the British monarchy

The queen and her husband pose proudly with their children, Prince Charles and Princess Anne, in October 1957

Elizabeth II in a crown and an ermine-trimmed cloak poses with Prince Philip in the Throne Room of Buckingham Palace

7 JUNE 1977

Silver Jubilee

After 25 years on the throne, the queen celebrates her Silver Jubilee. In the summer months, she takes part in a tour, intending to meet as many of her people as possible.

29 JULY 1981

Prince Charles marries Diana

After becoming engaged in February, the future king marries the people's princess, Diana, at St Paul's Cathedral, London. The ceremony is watched by a global TV audience of 750 million.

21 JUNE 1982

Prince William is born

The eldest son – and the second in line to the throne – William Arthur Philip Louis is born to Prince Charles and Princess Diana in the Lindo Wing of St Mary's Hospital, London.

9 JULY 1982

Buckingham Palace break in

In one of the worst breaches of security in history, a man named Michael Fagan breaks into the royal residence through the queen's bedroom. He wanders the corridors before the police are called.

built on this blueprint in the 1980s and 1990s as she waded into crowds with hand outstretched. A large part of the princess's popularity was the way she made people feel when she came face to face with them, and this would not have been so easy if she didn't have the opportunity to actually greet, hug or laugh with the masses. Now, the younger members of the family - William, Kate and until recently Harry and Meghan - do the same, revealing little tit-bits of information along the way. On the downside, both Prince Philip and Princess Anne got in trouble on the first tour that walkabouts were introduced, as Philip was said to have said a rude word in Greek, while Anne shocked the crowd when she exclaimed on a particularly breezy day, "This bloody wind!"

The 1980s: International relations

In the decade that the world was scrutinising Princess Diana's wardrobe, the queen was quietly showing how a role that wielded no political power could still do its bit for diplomacy. Ever since Henry VIII told Catherine of Aragon, "This isn't working out," and in 1536 changed his country's religion forever, relations between Great Britain and the Vatican were turbulent. During the reign of Elizabeth I, English law prohibited any official relations with the Papal States, and in 1801, the formation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland caused further friction. However, in 1829, legal obstacles relating to the Papal States were removed, paving the way for a new age.

In 1980, Pope John Paul II sent a congratulatory message to the queen for her efforts in championing the peace process during the Troubles, and this paved the way for his historic visit in 1982 - the first papal visit to Britain in 450 years. During the trip, His Holiness met with the queen at Buckingham Palace, became the first pope to visit Canterbury Cathedral, and celebrated mass with 80,000 people in Wembley Stadium. His visit was not the only momentous event in international relations in this decade, as four years later, the queen was heading east on one of the most important overseas tours she has ever undertaken. The rocky history between Britain and China had spanned centuries. During the 1960s there had been rioting in Hong Kong against British rule, and in December 1984 there were

Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother and her daughter and namesake Queen Elizabeth II, pictured together in 1967

Elizabeth and the prime ministers of the Commonwealth Nations at a conference held at Windsor Castle in 1960

15 SEPTEMBER 1984

Prince Harry is born
The birth of the younger brother to the future king shortly follows. Like his sibling, Prince Henry Charles Albert David – known as Prince Harry – is born in St Mary's Hospital in London.

20 NOVEMBER 1992

Windsor Castle fire
A devastating fire sweeps through Windsor Castle, ravaging anything in its path. More than £36 million worth of damage is done. The year becomes known as the queen's 'annus horribilis'.

28 AUGUST 1996

Prince Charles gets divorced from Diana
The people's princess and Prince Charles have been separated for years by this time, but at last their marriage is officially dissolved.

31 AUGUST 1997

Diana dies
Just over a year after her divorce with Prince Charles, Diana tragically dies in a car accident in Paris. Her sudden death will send Great Britain into a state of national mourning.

Prime Minister Edward Heath joins Her Majesty in escorting US President Richard Nixon and his wife on their visit to the UK

Revellers in Seaham, County Durham enjoy a street party to celebrate the queen's Silver Jubilee on 7 June 1977

talks between the Prime Minister of China Zhao Ziyang and Margaret Thatcher, which resulted in them signing the Sino-British Joint Declaration – meaning that Hong Kong would be given back to China on 1 July 1997. Hot on the heels of these high-profile, high-stakes talks, the queen and Prince Philip visited less than two years later, making Her Majesty the first reigning monarch to make a state visit to China. Important new bonds were forged as she walked among the newly excavated army of Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an. Such highly visible trips have been invaluable in forging and maintaining strong relationships with other countries, and will prove a fitting legacy to a reign filled with unprecedented change.

The 1990s: Reality bites

The golden age of public goodwill that the queen had experienced from her coronation and into the 1980s was beginning to dull as she moved into the 1990s. Three royal divorces, affairs, and acrimonious words from those who had lived behind palace walls diminished the family's popularity. Recorded private phone conversations were sold to newspapers, tell-all books were published and the public picked sides. Additionally, the institution of a royal family was accused of being outmoded and a waste of money. Numerous polls in the 1990s showed support for the family had dropped, and that the majority of people did not believe the monarchy would last another 100 years. The family was simply out of sync with the rest of the country.

The difference between life inside and outside palace walls had always been marked. There was little royal interaction with the public, and the family's day-to-day lives, their concerns and interests were dramatically different from that of their people. While the world modernised and changed throughout the 20th century, moves were made to lessen this divide, but it still wasn't enough. The royal family gradually lost their power, but they retained their privilege, and one of these privileges was finally reassessed after a fire caused almost £40 million of damage to Windsor Castle at the end of 1992 – the queen's self-titled 'annus horribilis'.

Because the castle is not a private residence, but owned by the state, restoration was due to be funded by the tax-payer. However, after the public

20 NOVEMBER 1997

Golden wedding anniversary

Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip celebrate their Golden wedding anniversary. They held a garden party at Buckingham Palace for other couples celebrating the same anniversary.

9 FEBRUARY 2002

Princess Margaret dies

The queen's only sibling passes away at the age of 71 after suffering a stroke. Over the course of her life, she had been the subject of much controversy, particularly about her personal life.

30 MARCH 2002

The Queen Mother dies

Only a matter of weeks after her sister's death, the queen experiences another tragic loss. At the age of 101, the Queen Mother was then the longest-lived member of the royal family.

30 APRIL 2002

50 years on the throne

Queen Elizabeth II celebrates her Golden Jubilee. For the first time ever, the gardens of Buckingham Palace are opened up to the public for several celebration concerts.

debate reached the House of Commons, it spilled into a wider discussion about the queen not paying taxes. The queen subsequently volunteered to start paying tax, and the Memorandum of Understanding on Royal Taxation was published in February 1993. From April 1994, the queen has paid income tax and capital gains tax. Additionally, instead of the Windsor Castle restoration being funded by the tax-payer, the queen made the decision to open up the Buckingham Palace state rooms to the public when she wasn't in residence over the summer months. This meant that the money raised for the Windsor Castle restoration came predominantly from Buckingham Palace ticket sales and increased turnover from the palace gift shop.

The 2000s: Behind closed doors

Following the constitutional crisis after the abdication of Edward VIII, the relationship between divorcees Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles needed to be handled carefully. Historically, the Church of England did not permit the re-marriage of people with living ex-spouses. However, this rule was changed in 2002 when the Church voted that, dependent on the decision of the vicar in question, divorcees could remarry. It now became possible for Charles to marry Camilla and still be king when the time came.

Things had started to go awry for Charles when he wasn't permitted to marry the woman he loved 30 years previously. The star-crossed couple were first in a relationship in 1971 when Charles was 23 and the then Camilla Shand was 24, but Charles felt too young to commit. While he spent time away in the Navy, Camilla returned to her ex-boyfriend Andrew Parker Bowles and they married. Charles lamented in a letter to his godfather Lord Mountbatten: "I suppose the feeling of emptiness will pass eventually."

After his marriage to Diana broke down, he returned to the now-separated Camilla. Following their divorces, the couple were preparing to go public with their relationship when Diana tragically died. Charles and Camilla made their first public appearance together two years later in 1999 at Camilla's sister's birthday party at The Ritz, but for many years they were both very unpopular, and goodwill towards the royal family was the lowest it had been for decades. The couple married

Prince Charles and his fiancée, Lady Diana Spencer, pictured on the eve of their 1981 'fairy tale' wedding

The queen in a less guarded moment, laughing with veterans at Stirling Castle, July 1986

20 DECEMBER 2007

Longest living monarch

On this day, Queen Elizabeth II becomes the longest living monarch. She overtakes her great-great-grandmother, Victoria, who passed away at the ripe old age of 81.

29 APRIL 2011

William marries Catherine

In a lavish ceremony at Westminster Abbey, Prince William marries his sweetheart Kate Middleton. The wedding is broadcast around the world, and the streets are lined with well wishers.

2-5 JUNE 2012

Diamond Jubilee

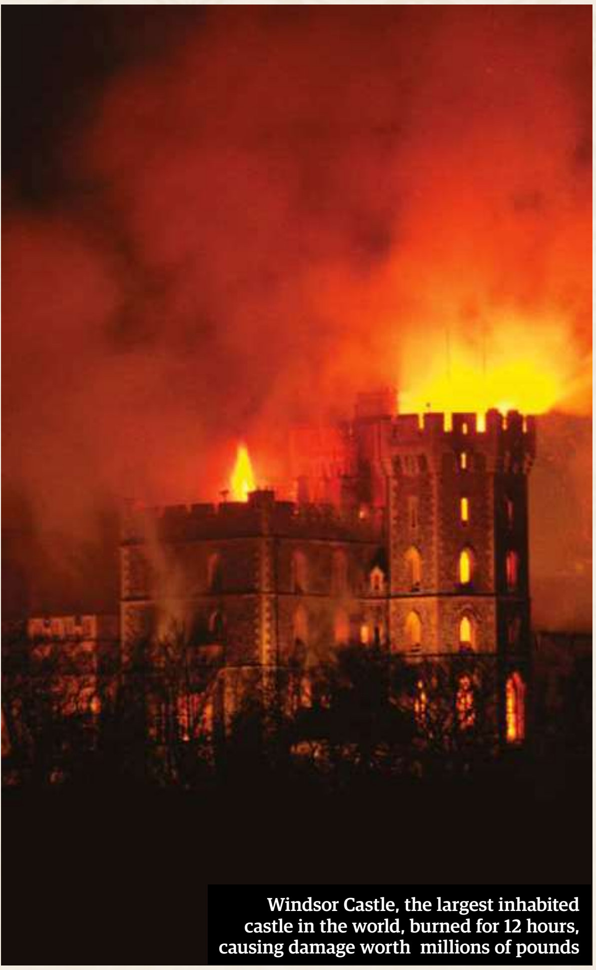
To mark the queen's 60-year reign, a weekend of celebrations take place across the country. Over the course of the year, she travels the length of the country to mark the occasion.

9 SEPTEMBER 2012

Longest-serving monarch

Having overtaken Victoria as the longest living monarch, Elizabeth overtakes her as the longest-serving monarch, too. Victoria managed 63 years, seven months and two days on the throne.

The funeral procession of Princess Diana – her coffin mounted on a ceremonial gun carriage – passes St James Park in London



Windsor Castle, the largest inhabited castle in the world, burned for 12 hours, causing damage worth millions of pounds

Prince William and Catherine Middleton walked down the aisle at Westminster Abbey as the royal family is renewed

at Windsor Guildhall in 2005, with the blessing of the queen. In her religious position, the queen believed she shouldn't attend the civil ceremony, and so she stayed away. She did, however, attend the blessing held afterwards at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. After the disasters of the 1990s, the following decade was all about the family re-building, and making changes behind closed doors. During her reign, the queen has focused on the big issues, such as making the royal family more accessible to the public, going on ground-breaking international visits and paying tax like the rest of her people, but now the smaller changes needed to be made.

The 2010s: A new generation

Prince William and Kate Middleton were launched onto the world's stage as a couple in an explosion of flashbulbs, and following the announcement of their engagement in November 2010, they reaped the rewards of lessons learned. Kate was edged slowly into royal life, and given access to a battery of advisers. The queen advised William to tear up his official wedding guest list suggested by couriers, and start with his friends. Then as the years passed, Kate's family became the first Windsor in-laws not to be 'left at the door' when they walked out of the church on the wedding day.

While for many the queen's defining moment of the decade is her cameo alongside James Bond in the London 2012 Olympics opening ceremony, perhaps the most significant move she made was her historic trip to Ireland in 2011, at the age of 85. For nearly 500 years the relationship between Britain and Ireland had been complicated and dangerous, but 13 years after the Troubles officially ended, the queen arrived in May 2011. It was the first time a British monarch had visited Ireland since the Troubles, and so the city centre was turned into a car-free zone to prevent terrorist bombs. More than 100 armed British police were on the streets, with 8,000 local police and 2,000 soldiers drafted in as additional security. Among other events, the queen gave a speech at Dublin Castle, the former centre of British rule, saying: "So much of this visit reminds us of the complexity of our history, its many layers and tradition, but also the importance of forbearance and conciliation. Of being able to bow to the past, but not be bound by it."

21 APRIL 2016

The 90th birthday

While the queen's actual birthday is 21 April, and on it she turns 90 years old, she celebrates an official birthday on a Saturday in June with the Trooping the Colour.

19 MAY 2018

Harry marries Meghan

In a ceremony at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, Prince Harry marries American actress Meghan Markle. The ceremony is followed by a procession through the streets of Windsor.

31 MARCH 2020

Harry & Meghan step down from royal duties

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex officially step down as senior royals and no longer carry out duties on behalf of the queen.

9 APRIL 2021

Prince Philip dies

Prince Philip dies peacefully at Windsor Castle, just two months before his 100th birthday. The queen is by his side and privately describes his death as having left a huge void in her life.

© Alamy

THE FUTURE OF THE WINDSORS

150 The next generation
As the Windsors entered a new millennium, the dynasty continues to grow and evolve, embracing an entirely modern world

152 End of empire, birth of Commonwealth
Having inherited an Empire on which the sun never set, the Windsors have watched it fade, to be replaced by a Commonwealth valued by them and its members

158 Bringing the firm into the future
The Windsors have always shown a knack for keeping up with the changing world, but as they move through the 21st century, they face new challenges

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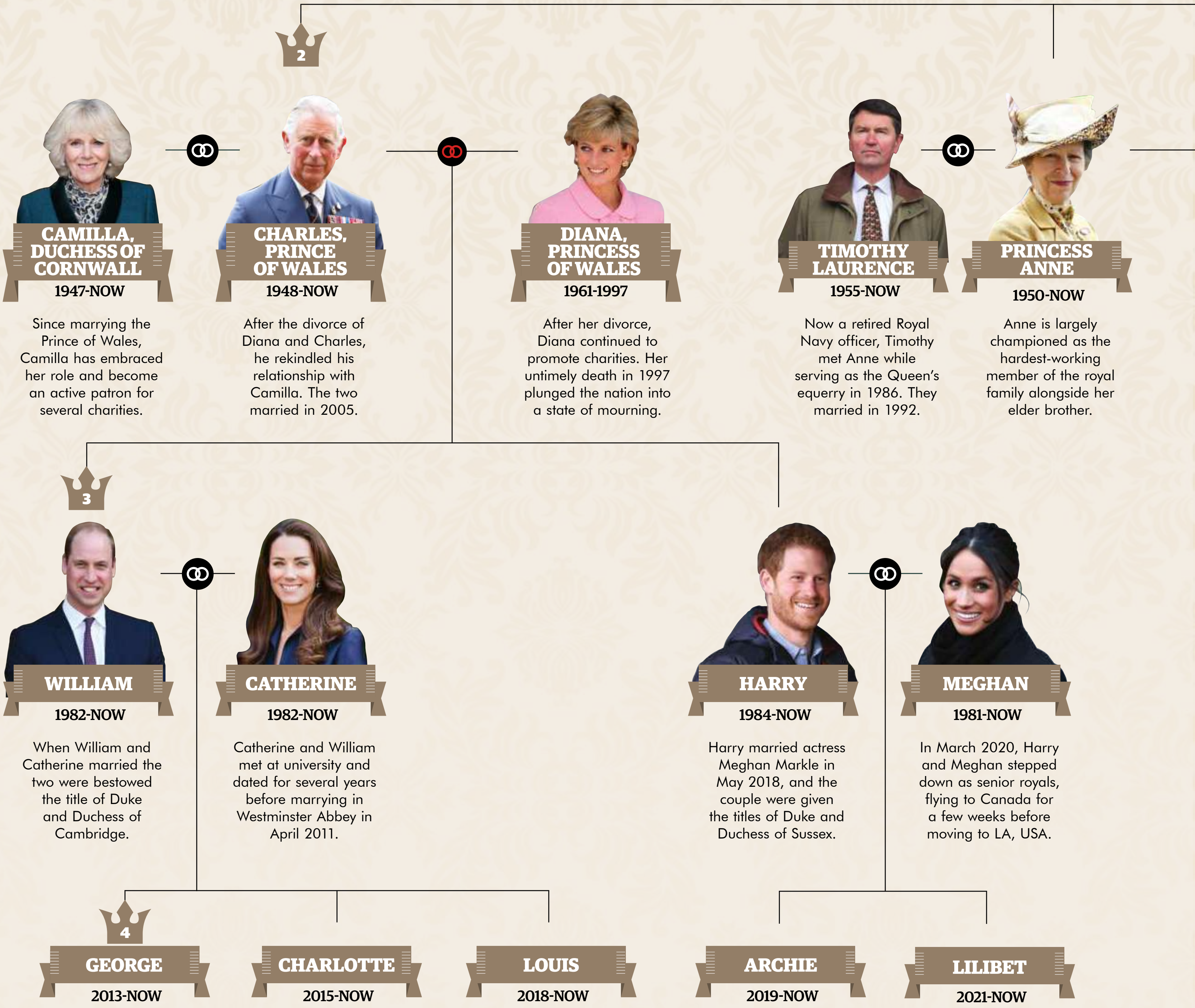
Order of succession

Marriage

Divorced

THE NEXT GENERATION

As the Windsors entered a new millennium the dynasty continued to grow and evolve, embracing an entirely modern world



CAMILLA, DUCHESS OF CORNWALL
1947-NOW

Since marrying the Prince of Wales, Camilla has embraced her role and become an active patron for several charities.

CHARLES, PRINCE OF WALES
1948-NOW

After the divorce of Diana and Charles, he rekindled his relationship with Camilla. The two married in 2005.

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES
1961-1997

After her divorce, Diana continued to promote charities. Her untimely death in 1997 plunged the nation into a state of mourning.

TIMOTHY LAURENCE
1955-NOW

Now a retired Royal Navy officer, Timothy met Anne while serving as the Queen's equerry in 1986. They married in 1992.

PRINCESS ANNE
1950-NOW

Anne is largely championed as the hardest-working member of the royal family alongside her elder brother.

WILLIAM
1982-NOW

When William and Catherine married the two were bestowed the title of Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

CATHERINE
1982-NOW

Catherine and William met at university and dated for several years before marrying in Westminster Abbey in April 2011.

HARRY
1984-NOW

Harry married actress Meghan Markle in May 2018, and the couple were given the titles of Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

MEGHAN
1981-NOW

In March 2020, Harry and Meghan stepped down as senior royals, flying to Canada for a few weeks before moving to LA, USA.

GEORGE
2013-NOW

CHARLOTTE
2015-NOW

LOUIS
2018-NOW

ARCHIE
2019-NOW

LILIBET
2021-NOW

ELIZABETH II

1926-NOW

♛ 1952-NOW

PRINCE PHILIP

1921-2021

Diana, Princess of Wales, with her sons on the log flume at Thorpe Park

MARK PHILLIPS

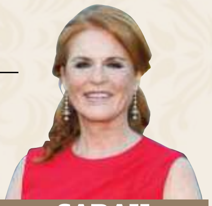
1948-NOW

Mark and Anne married in 1973 and divorced in 1992. Mark won an Olympic Gold medal in 1972 in the equestrian events.

ANDREW, DUKE OF YORK

1960-NOW

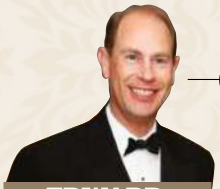
In recent years, Andrew's reputation has been tarnished by his friendship with Jeffrey Epstein. He stepped down from royal duties in November 2019.



SARAH FERGUSON

1959-NOW

Sarah and Andrew married in 1986 and divorced in 1996. Sarah was friends with Diana before and during their marriages.



EDWARD, EARL OF WESSEX

1964-NOW

The queen's youngest son works as a member of the royal family full time and chose to become an earl after marriage.

SOPHIE, COUNTESS OF WESSEX

1965-NOW

Sophie and Edward married in 1999. Before marrying into the royal family Sophie worked as a PR executive.

PETER

1977-NOW

The first of the queen's grandchildren, Peter married Autumn Kelly in 2008 and the couple have two children together.

ZARA

1981-NOW

An award-winning equestrian and Olympian, Zara married rugby player Mike Tindall and the couple have three children.

BEATRICE

1988-NOW

Despite her lack of seniority, Beatrice remains a popular member of the royal family. She married in a private ceremony in July 2020.

EUGENIE

1990-NOW

Princess Eugenie works at a London art gallery and does not carry out official engagements. She married in October 2018 and has one child.

LOUISE

2003-NOW

Known as Lady Louise Windsor, unlike her cousins she is not a HRH. She was a bridesmaid at Prince William's wedding.

JAMES

2007-NOW

Like his sister, James in not a HRH and is instead known as James, Viscount Severn.

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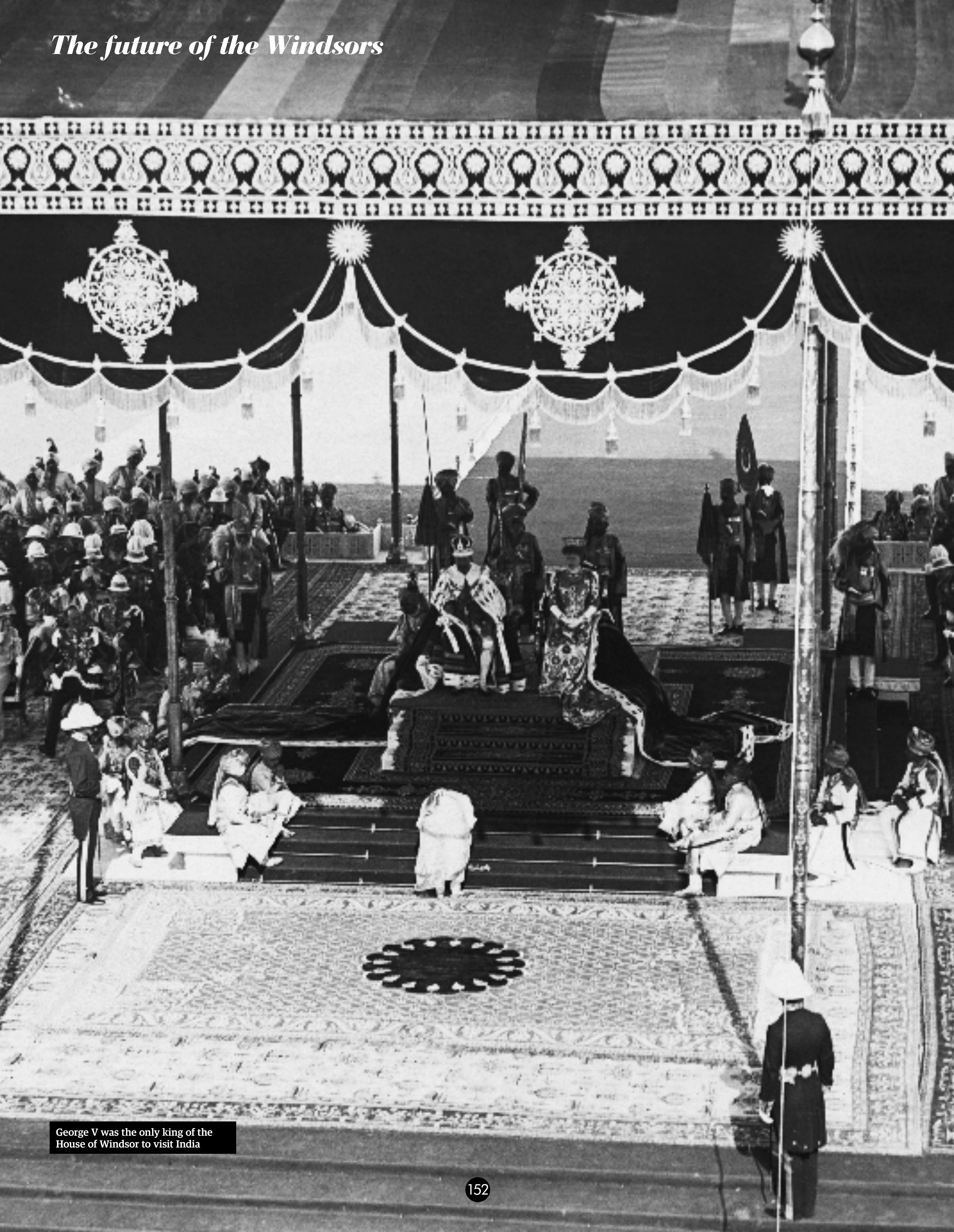


George V was the only king of the House of Windsor to visit India

END OF EMPIRE, BIRTH OF COMMONWEALTH

The Windsors inherited an empire on which the sun never set, but they have watched it fade to be replaced by a Commonwealth that is valued by them and its members

Written by June Woolerton

The Windsors briefly ruled the biggest empire any British royal house had known, but in the course of less than a century they watched it disappear. However, the loss of a dominion on which the sun never set made way for the creation of a Commonwealth of Nations, which has set its own standards in international relations.

When the House of Windsor came into being in July 1917, Britain still ruled the vast British Empire. It incorporated around one-quarter of the world's population and included Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, Nigeria, South Africa and Burma. Actual power in different parts of the empire varied enormously by 1917, with Canada, Newfoundland, New Zealand and Australia as well as the Union of South Africa having taken on the self-governing status of dominions. But where British rule was tighter, anger was beginning to bubble up, as in India, and even spill over into rebellion against the imperial system, as it had done in Ireland.

The importance placed on empire was also shown in 1917 when the prime minister, David Lloyd George, invited the leaders from the Dominions to join the Imperial War Cabinet. In the same year, George V created a new system of honours to reward those who had assisted Britain during the war in noncombatant roles. The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire introduced many of the honours we know today and took as its motto 'For God and Empire'.

However, World War I had already shown the cracks in the imperial structure. Britain had declared war on Germany on its own behalf and that of its empire, and all the countries under its control sent soldiers to fight in the conflict. Around 2.5 million took part in the Great War, the largest number coming from India. When peace finally came, the Treaty of Versailles increased the spread of the British Empire with Palestine, Trandjordan, Iraq, Tanganyika, Togoland and parts of Cameroon added. An additional 13 million people came under the nominal rule of the House of Windsor, while its territorial hold now covered around one-fifth of the world's land mass.

But the discussions that followed World War I also showed the rapid changes engulfing the empire as the dominions signed their own peace treaties. Meanwhile, the 1916 Easter Uprising in Ireland and the subsequent Civil War there had made independence a pressing issue. In fact, the societal changes brought by World War I focused minds on demands for more self-determination across the empire.

None of this was lost on George V, who took a close interest in his territories. At the start of his reign, he had headed to India for the Delhi Durbar, which presented him to the country as its emperor, but his involvement was much more than ceremonial. He followed political developments closely and was alarmed by some parts of the British government policy against the continued unrest in Ireland. In 1921, he accepted an invitation to open the new parliament in Belfast where he appealed for conciliation between the warring factions and then watched with satisfaction as a truce was agreed soon afterwards leading to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty at the end of the year. A royal proclamation led to the Irish Free State Constitution Act of 1922, the separation of Northern Ireland and self dominion for the new Irish Free State.

But while King George consulted politicians about the state of his realms, he was less enthusiastic about touring them. He often said he would visit all of them or none at all and with plenty to occupy him at home, it was his family, and particularly his two eldest sons, who became busy touring the many lands that came under royal rule.

The early years of the Windsors saw the House's younger members take on an increasing number of tours to the empire. Edward, Prince of Wales, visited Canada in 1919 and Australia the following year, ensuring a visible presence for the dynasty in its dominions. In 1924, the newly married duke and duchess of York headed off on an extensive tour of British colonies in east Africa. In 1927, they spent six months in Australia and New Zealand. These tours were designed to give a visible presence of the 'mother country' in the lands that still nominally belonged to her.

The importance of empire was also stressed at home in the years after World War I. In 1919, the Prince of Wales became president of the

The last day of the empire

The Prince of Wales was a witness to the end of the imperial realms once ruled by the Windsors

In the dark, final hours of 30 June 1997, the British Empire came to its ultimate end. Just before midnight, the Prince of Wales stood up to read a message from the Queen, just minutes before Britain formally handed Hong Kong over to China. As midnight approached, the National Anthem was played and the Union Flag was lowered, bringing down the final curtain on an imperial structure that had, at one point, defined the rule of the House of Windsor.

Hong Kong had become part of the empire during the reign of Queen Victoria and negotiations about handing it over to China had been going on for decades by the time the official transfer of power took place. Prince Charles wrote at the time that some of the events, including one performance by the Hong Kong Police Force to mark the transition, were so moving that there were "very few dry eyes in the house".

The prince looked emotional, too, as midnight struck. The first moments of 1 July 1997 saw the Chinese flag raised over Hong Kong as it became part of different country. And the Prince of Wales walked away from the ceremony soon afterwards, having handed over the final part of an empire that he himself was never destined to rule.

Prince Charles takes a final salute as Hong Kong passes from Britain to China in 1997

Organising Committee of the British Empire Exhibition, which was designed to promote links and boost trade between countries. That exhibition, which eventually took place at Wembley between 23 April 1924 and 31 October 1925, involved 56 of the 58 imperial territories and became a physical display of the almost unimaginable extent of the empire. Each country had a pavilion that reflected its own culture while halls housing industrial, technological and historical displays were also included in the mini empire that took over Wembley. The royal family were frequent visitors and, in total, 17 million people visited the exhibition. But it was to prove a final curtain call rather than a launch pad for a new version of empire.

Just a year later, the seventh Imperial Conference was held in London, bringing together the prime ministers and leading politicians of the dominions. On the table were demands for complete autonomy. The countries had already won the right to set their own foreign policy at the conference of 1923, but the 1926 meeting produced the Balfour Declaration, which stated, for the first time, that the dominions were to be "autonomous communities... equal in status" - in other words, no longer subordinate to Britain. Those present decided the dominions would form a "Commonwealth of Nations".

It was a move that George V openly welcomed but privately mourned. In 1928, the then colonial secretary, Leo Amery, recalled lunching with the king where George had expressed, more than once, his unhappiness with the constitutional changes taking place. When the Statute of Westminster gave full legal standing to the 1926 alterations in 1931, George was equally disgruntled. He believed, although never stated publicly, that the documents had been drawn up to keep just a few of the dominions happy.

The Statute of Westminster meant that, from 1931 onwards, Britain had no control over the laws of those dominions and their parliaments could dispense with British legislation they disagreed with. Meanwhile, the Irish Free State issued a new constitution in 1937 that further distanced it from British rule, and it marked one of the final steps on the road to the declaration of a fully independent republic.

The change in status was reflected in one of the most important ceremonies the House of Windsor had known. In May 1937, King George VI was crowned, putting a final end to the turbulence caused by the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII, in December 1936. However, his coronation oath had to be changed to reflect the new, autonomous status of the dominions. The changes were further underlined in 1939 when Britain took up arms against Nazi Germany. This time, the dominions made their own declarations of war and the Irish Free State chose to stay neutral.

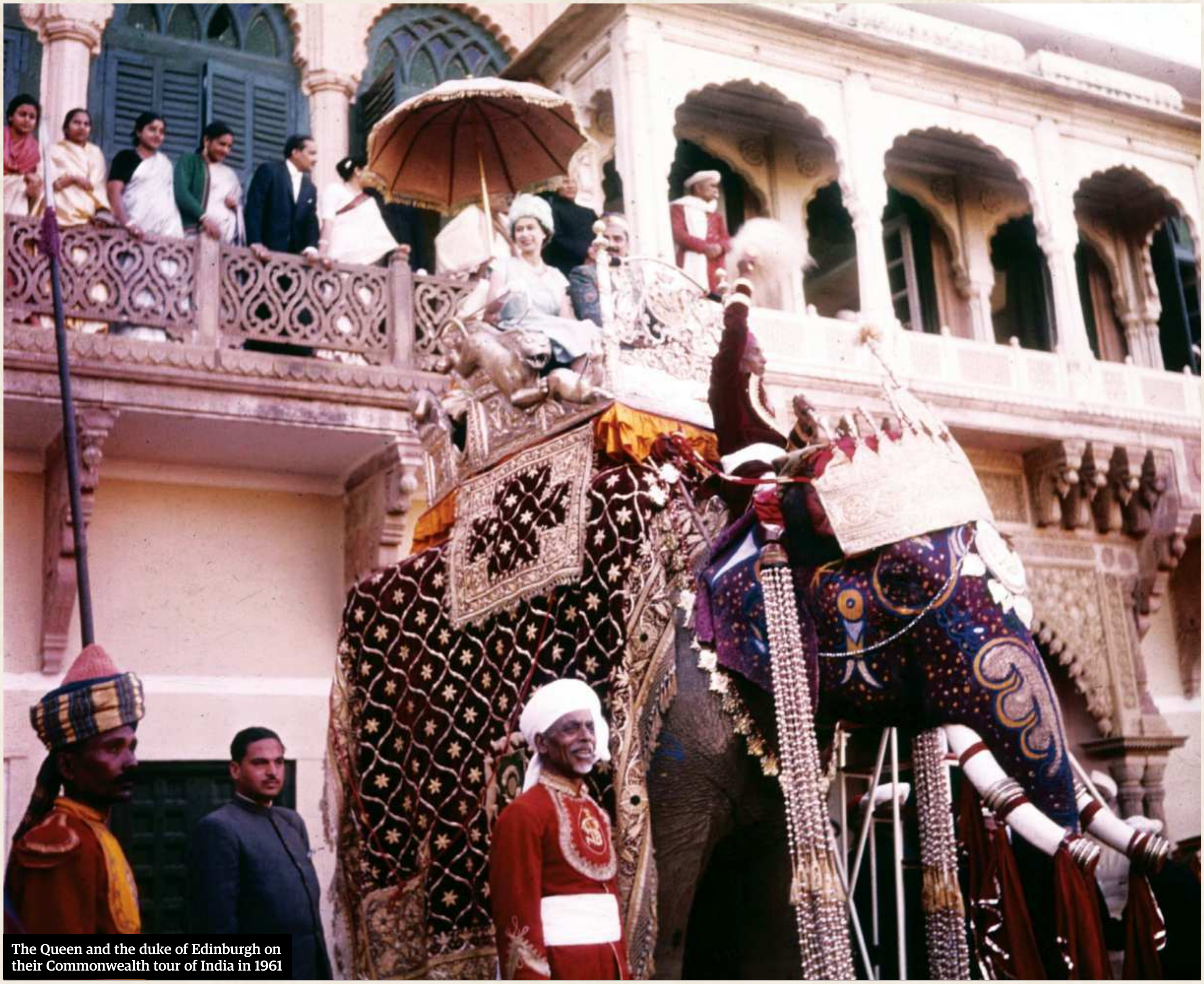
World War II was George VI's finest hour, but while his personal courage and role in rallying support for the fight against Nazism even in the darkest days of the conflict became one of the most enduring legacies of the House of Windsor, the same conflict also saw new pressures brought to bear on the empire that would ultimately lead to its fragmentation. Colonies including Singapore, Burma, Malaya and Hong Kong were occupied by Japanese forces, who had joined the war on the side of Hitler, while Australia and New Zealand relied heavily on the United States during parts of the conflict, leading to new alliances.

The king often broadcast across the world, on Empire Day, to rally troops and spirits and had visited Malta during his stay with Allied troops in northern Africa. His contribution won continuing admiration but once victory was secured and the occupied colonies set free, a new demand for self-rule began to take hold in many parts of the British Empire.

The demise of the imperial structure was one that George VI had long been aware of. At the start of the war, writing to the then US ambassador to London, Joseph Kennedy, the king had acknowledged that some were already speaking of a "loss of prestige of the British Empire", but he still believed in the links that bound its nations together, adding: "The British Empire has once again shown to the World a united front." However, almost as soon as the war was over, that united front began to melt away.

The demands for independence now being made around the empire found support in the newly elected Labour government that was led to power in 1945 by Clement Atlee. They were most pressing in India, where a campaign for self-determination and ultimately complete autonomy had been continuing for decades. In

King George V and Queen Mary were regular visitors to the British Empire Exhibition, which dominated London in 1924 and 1925



The Queen and the duke of Edinburgh on their Commonwealth tour of India in 1961

> "His coronation oath had to be changed to reflect the new, autonomous status of the dominions"

1942, Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress had come close to forcing Britain out of the country and Winston Churchill had promised them independence after the war if they would keep supporting the empire while the conflict continued. That move had surprised and angered George VI, but by 1947, he had finally realised that change was inevitable.

The king became increasingly concerned about the possibility of conflict in India itself and, when the government recalled Lord Wavell as viceroy of India, George insisted he be replaced with his cousin Lord Louis Mountbatten, who was committed to introducing independence as quickly as possible. The Indian National Congress was now able to call the shots and the economic damages of war, as well as a prevailing sense of change, meant that Britain was in no position to fight. The king insisted Mountbatten be given clear instructions but events over took both of them and soon after his arrival in India in March 1947, Lord Louis realised that swift actions were needed. Working with Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the Indian National Congress, he drew up a plan for partition as the threat of conflict intensified. India became independent on 15 August 1947, the same day that the new, self-governing country of Pakistan came into being.

Within a year, Burma and Ceylon had also broken away from the empire, while 1948 saw Britain withdraw from Palestine, which was now left in the hands of the United Nations. In 1949, the Irish Free State formally became the Republic of Ireland. George VI, meanwhile, took advice on what he should now call himself as he had reigned, since 1936, as 'Rex Imperator'. In the end, he chose to sign his name as 'George R'.

He also took on a new role as 'head of the Commonwealth'. The organisation had taken shape following the Balfour Declaration of 1926 but when the new Indian government decided it would declare the country a republic, questions were asked over how that would affect the

The duke and duchess visisted Katoomba, Australia, in 1927 as part of their worldwide tour

Commonwealth that was officially led by the king. The decision of Indian politicians to recognise George VI as "the symbol of the free association" of the members of the Commonwealth led to the London Declaration of 1949, which described its countries as "free and equal members" with the aim of "freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace liberty and progress". It was the start of a new union but another death knell for the empire.

The early years of the reign of Elizabeth II were marked by a rapid wave of change across the imperial structure once ruled by the Windsors. In her Christmas Day broadcast of 1953, the Queen spoke of the Commonwealth as an "entirely new conception, built on... friendship, loyalty and the desire for freedom and peace". One of her first acts following her coronation was to embark on a major tour, taking her to the countries of the Commonwealth and the empire. But as the Queen and the duke of Edinburgh greeted cheering crowds in Australia, Canada and Jamaica, more countries were declaring independence. Sudan was granted self-government in 1953 and became independent in 1956. The following year, Malaya broke away, while Africa's Gold Coast declared independence as Ghana.

"The early years of the reign of Elizabeth II were marked by a rapid wave of change across the imperial structure"

The floral emblems of all the nations of the Commonwealth were embroidered onto the veil worn by Meghan Markle at her wedding on 19 May 2018

Meanwhile, the Suez Crisis of 1956 had exposed Britain's limitations as a world power. In 1960, Harold Macmillan made his famous "winds of change" speech in South Africa, a formal recognition of the evolving nature of the relationship between Britain and its empire. Within a decade, nearly all of the remaining colonies in Africa had become independent of Britain. In the Caribbean, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago declared independence in 1962 with Barbados following in 1966, while Britain's last colony on the American mainland, Honduras, became self-governing in 1964.

In the decades that followed, most other territories followed suit. But while their moves to independence made headlines, the expected pattern was for countries to break away from an empire that was fading into history. There were problems. Turbulence in Rhodesia led to civil war and in 1979, British rule was briefly reimposed while an international settlement was arranged. Meanwhile, independence in Kenya followed the Mau Mau uprising. When Rhodesia achieved independence as Zimbabwe in 1980, Britain lost its last African holding. The end of empire came with the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, following which 14 countries remain under the sovereignty of Britain and its head of state, the Queen. They were renamed the British Overseas Territories in 2002.

While the House of Windsor has, like many a royal dynasty before it, seen an empire disappear, its senior members have taken on an important role in building and developing the organisation that replaced it, the Commonwealth. The Queen has made no secret of her devotion to the Commonwealth, for many years travelling to the heads of government meetings held around the world. She has also attended many of the Commonwealth Games, held every four years, and which grew from the Empire Games that were first set up in 1930.

When she succeeded her father in 1952, there were few questions as to whether she should also become head of the Commonwealth. However, in 2018 she publicly intervened in the debate as to whether the same role should pass to her son, the Prince of Wales, when he eventually becomes king. She gave her backing to Charles and the group's leaders followed suit, guaranteeing the House of Windsor a leading role in an organisation that it helped to establish.

And the Commonwealth clearly remains vital to the royal family. When marrying Prince Harry, who was then the Commonwealth Youth Ambassador, Meghan Markle opted to decorate her wedding veil with the emblems of all the Commonwealth countries. It was more than a superficial gesture. The starring role given to the Commonwealth at the royal wedding showed the continuing bond the House of Windsor has with the countries that it once ruled. Regular tours and visits to lands that were once part of the empire are a major part of the royal diary, while the Queen's interest, often behind the scenes, in the welfare of the communities across the Commonwealth is often given public expression in her Christmas Day broadcasts where the Commonwealth still features strongly.

While the nature of its relationship with its many countries may have changed, the bond the House of Windsor feels for the empire that they watched transform itself has only strengthened in recent years, especially when the Duke and Duchess of Sussex announced in 2020 that they were stepping down as working royals and becoming financially independent. While the couple revealed that they intended to split their time between the UK and North America, the Covid-19 pandemic made this difficult during 2020. Although Harry returned to England in 2021 for Prince Philip's funeral, the couple remain in the US, raising their two children.

Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last viceroy, announces independence for India in 1947

Marlborough House was home to two Windsor matriarchs before becoming the headquarters of the Commonwealth

The royal home of the Commonwealth

The 'granny house' of the Windsors is now the base for the organisation that covers half the world

The Commonwealth may be a modern institution but its headquarters are in one of London's oldest and most regal buildings. The organisation is based at Marlborough House, built for a favourite of Queen Anne, and it's the place where two queen consorts retreated in widowhood.

Marlborough House, designed by Christopher Wren, was built in the 1700s for Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who at the time was still a confidante of Queen Anne. However, the two would part company in 1711, shortly after the house was completed. It was taken over by the Crown in 1817 and in the following years was home to a number of royals, becoming a favourite residence of Queen Victoria's eldest son, Edward, and his wife, Alexandra.

Alexandra set up home there in 1910 following the death of her husband and her devoted son, King George V, often called on her there in the years leading up to her own death in 1925. In 1936, George's own widow, Queen Mary, chose Marlborough House as her own residence after departing Buckingham Palace.

The red brick, Grade I listed building is also now the seat of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the main institution of the organisation. It is here that planning for the meetings of the heads of government takes place and where much of the Commonwealth's policies are developed and refined.

© Getty

'Queen Elizabeth II' and James Bond parachute into the London Olympics opening ceremony

BRINGING THE FIRM INTO THE FUTURE

The Windsors have always shown a knack for keeping up with the changing world but as they move through the 21st century, they face new challenges in making a modern monarchy

Written by June Woolerton

The House of Windsor has been evolving since the moment it was created. George V's decision to rename his family came from a need to move away from a past that was in danger of putting his throne in peril. Since then, his dynasty has continued to innovate to move with the times and as it heads into the 21st century it seeks to modernise itself once more.

Changing the dynasty name meant that, at a time of economic crisis brought about by the cost of war and the impact it had on society, the public royal family became smaller and more concentrated. That is a policy the Queen herself has followed. During the 2012 Diamond Jubilee celebrations there was a push from Buckingham Palace for a slimmed-down royal family. The balcony appearance at the end of those Jubilee celebrations showed where the focus would fall. Only the Queen, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall and William, Kate and Harry appeared to greet the crowds while the rest of the family stayed behind the scenes, supporting but not starring in the big celebrations.

Modernising the Windsors has also seen the Queen alter the titles used by her family. When her youngest son, Prince Edward, married Sophie Rhys-Jones in 1999, it was announced that the couple's children wouldn't use the royal titles they were automatically entitled to as offspring of a prince of the blood royal. Instead, they were given the titles used by children of an earl, depleting the number of HRHs and ensuring that their future path lies outside the royal family.

Another step to modernisation came with a change to the succession laws that removed the inequalities that had governed them for centuries. The Succession to the Crown Act 2013 abolished male preference primogeniture, the system that had seen big sisters overtaken by little brothers in the line to the throne. It was first suggested in the Perth Agreement of 2011, which stated that all 16 countries that have the Queen as Head of State would work together to amend the succession laws. A bill was published in 2012 and received Royal Assent on 25 April 2013. It meant that the line to the throne now went on birth order rather than gender, with the new rules applying to all royals born after 28 October 2011. Princess Charlotte became the most senior royal to benefit from it when Louis was born in April 2018.

The Act also brought other changes with it that made the royal family seem more in tune with those around them. The 1772 Royal Marriages Act had required all descendants of King George II, apart from the children of princesses who had married into foreign ruling houses, to gain the consent of the reigning monarch before they said "I do". The 2013 Act repealed that, with just the first six in the line of succession now required to obtain permission before marrying. The new laws also removed the centuries-old bar on members of the royal family marrying Catholics – until then, such a marriage cost the prince or princess concerned their right to the throne. In an age of religious tolerance, it was an overdue and necessary alteration.

It also highlighted the challenges faced by the monarchy in ensuring that it appeals to and supports all parts of society. Although the 2013 Act stipulated that the monarch must be a member of the Church of England, both the Queen and Prince Charles have led attempts by the royal family to reach out to other faiths. Prince Charles, in particular, has been celebrated for his work in establishing strong relations with leaders of different faith groups across the UK and the Commonwealth. In 2013, he was widely praised for his keynote speech at the London-based World Islamic Economic Forum when it held its first meeting in a non-Muslim country. In 2015, he spoke of his desire to make sure all faiths felt included in British life, although he dismissed reports that he would alter the title of 'Defender of the Faith' used by all monarchs since 1544 to 'Defender of Faith' instead.

Not that modernisation is always easy or intentional. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Prince of Wales was sometimes mocked for his passionate support for environmental causes. By the 1990s,

The Cambridges at the 2017 Baftas – walking the red carpet at celeb-led events boosts the royal profile

Prince Harry, like his brother, married for love and his bride has brought her own touch of modernity to the monarchy from the start

> "Senior royals have chosen campaigns to support, putting issues at the heart of their work"

however, the global interest in green issues and protecting the planet saw the prince hailed as an innovator. The modern House of Windsor is sometimes careful in the areas it chooses to back but this assiduous decision-making can reap benefits, too. Both Charles and his father, the duke of Edinburgh, have spearheaded organisations aiming to ensure equality of opportunity for young people across the UK and the Commonwealth. The Prince's Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme provide chances for young people to learn new skills and have helped thousands over the past few decades.

That example of using royal position to promote good causes isn't a new one but as the Windsors modernise, the way they offer their backing has altered. Royals have chosen campaigns to support, putting issues at the heart of their work. The decision by the Cambridges to promote mental health went on to shape the debate around the cause and showed a new way of royals making use of the spotlight that is constantly shining on them.

Media coverage remains instrumental in ensuring that the royal family is seen to move with the times. In the dark days of the early 1990s, when the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales was falling apart, the Windsors and the press seemed to be at almost constant loggerheads, while the death of Diana was blamed, in no small part, on the incessant media interest in her every move. However, the move to modernisation has seen a change in the attitude towards those who tell the story of the royals. Lines are still drawn at intrusion into private times but the Windsors have embraced modern media themselves and have seen the opportunity that social channels like Twitter and Instagram can provide.

Their official social media accounts are now used to share images and provide almost real-time coverage of royal engagements, offering a level of control over their image that had proved frustrating for them in the past. The royal accounts allow them to tell their own story as they see it and younger members have also used it to promote causes close to their hearts. In the run up to Prince Harry's wedding to Meghan Markle, the official Kensington Royal Instagram account shared plenty of behind-the-scenes tales of the marriage preparations. In a social media age where millions, especially young people, get their news from Twitter and Instagram, the royal family is ensuring it is the forefront of change.

There has also been a surge in TV appearances by senior Windsors, giving backstage glimpses that have been rare in the past. In the past five years, there have been dozens of mainstream TV programmes offering a glimpse of royals going about their daily life. The late Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall are among the senior family members who have given cameras access to their working lives for long periods at a time, resulting in programmes that allow the Windsors to show how they go about the job they were born to do. The Queen has given TV interviews, talking about her coronation on the 65th anniversary in 2018 while in 2016 she was seen chatting to Prince Charles as they watched old cinefilms in a programme to mark her 90th birthday. This unprecedented access is another acknowledgement that 'the Firm' has to reach out to those it rules to remain relevant.

However, even this tight control of image can't deflect all negative publicity. Money remains a contentious issue and even though the royal

The royal family congregate on the balcony of Buckingham Palace for the centenary of the Royal Air Force

The Queen teamed up with national treasure David Attenborough in 2018 in *The Queen's Green Planet*

family now takes the lead in publishing its accounts on an annual basis, the amount it costs can still lead to calls that it is anachronistic and overly expensive. The Queen's decision to pay taxes, made in 1992 at the end of what she described as her "annus horribilis", was seen as a modernising move in itself and, as is to be expected, the royal accounts are pored over and pulled apart on their publication every year.

Meanwhile, the very make-up of the royal family has altered in the last decade and it is now seen as more representative of the country that it rules. When Prince William and Prince Harry decided to settle down, there was no pressure on either of them to find partners with royal blood. Plenty was written about Kate Middleton's descent from mining stock and her mother's work as an air hostess but it was largely celebratory, reflecting the idea that the royal family now included those with less than an aristocratic background.

The marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle was seen as another major moment of modernisation. The new duchess of Sussex, who is mixed race and who made her own fortune as an actress, has been seen as an innovator for the royals with her biography on the official website stating clearly that she is a feminist. This vocal support for an issue that is dominating society in the present day is yet another step towards greater inclusivity by the royal family.

In fact, none of the Queen's great-grandchildren have, so far, married anyone with a title and their decisions to wed for love rather than dynastic advantage is seen as a levelling factor for the family. Only the children of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge will have royal titles in the future, once more avoiding the extended family that has, in the past, proved problematic.

Questions remain as to how a centralised royal family will really work, especially now the Duke and Duchess of Sussex have stepped back as senior royals. In 2017, the Court Circular recorded over 3,500 official engagements for 'the Firm' – however, just 1,500 of those were undertaken by the core members. A challenge for the House of Windsor as it aims to move with the times is how to fill the gaps left in the royal rota by the retirement ot stepping back of members who keep up its image in vital engagements. It also faces the challenge of ensuring that tradition isn't lost in the move to modernise.

The Queen might be the oldest and longest ever reigning monarch in British history but she remains instrumental in the move to keep the monarchy relevant. For she, like the grandfather who founded the dynasty in 1917, knows that the future of the Windsors depends on modernisation for its continued popularity and, ultimately, its survival.

Generation next

George, Charlotte and Louis will lead the royal family in years to come and they are being introduced at an early age as the Windsors look to the future

The future of the royal family might be under the control of the Queen and the Prince of Wales right now, but it is the youngest members who will have to continue the changes being brought in now to ensure that the House of Windsor remains relevant. Although Prince George of Cambridge and his siblings, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis, have a relatively low profile at the moment, their inclusion in royal events from an early age is an indication of how vital they are to ensuring the Firm remains relevant.

George and Charlotte are now regulars at events like Trooping the Colour, but they have also carried out several overseas tours with their parents. George went to Australia and New Zealand with his parents before his first birthday while both children headed to Canada with mum and dad on an official visit in the autumn of 2016. They were also taken to Germany and Poland when William and Kate toured the countries at the request of the Foreign Office in the summer of 2017.

Although their role at these events is small, it has proved vital. Images of George and Charlotte smiling and waving alongside their parents aren't just sweet souvenirs of a family that doesn't like to be apart. They provide a modern and fresh image for the Firm as well as proving a reminder that the Windsors have guaranteed the future of the monarchy into the 22nd century and the work to ensure it keeps evolving with the times is already under way.

A young, happy family going about royal duties is a vital part of the modern image of the House of Windsor

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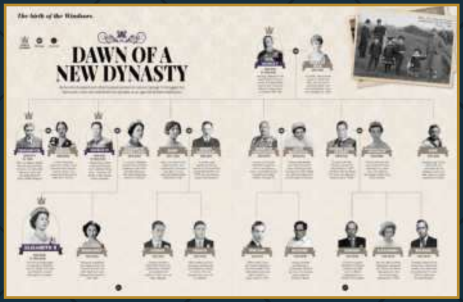

DAWN OF A NEW DYNASTY

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Chart the key figures in the House of Windsor, from George V to Prince Louis

THE HAPPY HOME OF 'US FOUR'

AN IDYLLIC CHILDHOOD

Uncover the blissful early years of Queen Elizabeth II at 145 Piccadilly

END OF EMPIRE, BIRTH OF COMMONWEALTH

END OF AN EMPIRE

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